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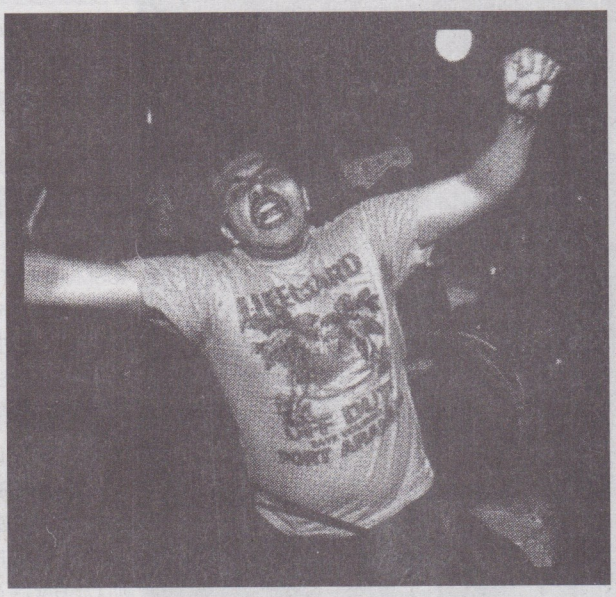

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For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

GRACE AMBROSE

- G.L.O.S.S. – EP + live
- AUSMUTEANTS / LUMPY & THE DUMPERS – flexi
- DEPARTMENTSTORE SANTAS – LP
- L.O.T.I.O.N. – Digital C.A.M.O. LP
- SUNDAY PAINTERS – both LPs
- L. VOAG – The Way Out LP + 7
- BEEF JERK – Tragic LP / EXIT ORDER – EP
- FLOWERS OF EVIL – 12" / LATEX – EP
- ROYAL HEADACHE – High LP
- THE STOPS – LP / DISGUSTI – EP / TSA – live

LYDIA ATHANASOPOULOU

- LA MISMA – Kanizadi LP
- ORDEN MUNDIAL / DIÄT / RIXE – live
- S.H.I.T. / UNA BÈSTIA / GLUE – live
- SADICOS / DIGITAL OCTOPUS / BLAZING EYE – live
- G.L.O.S.S. – Girls Living Outside Society's Shit EP
- L.O.T.I.O.N. – Digital Control and Man's Obsolescence LP
- DISGUSTI – A Thousand Prickly Needles EP
- AUSMUTEANTS / LUMPY & THE DUMPERS – flexi
- HUNCHES – 45 / MÜLLTÜTE – 12"
- L. VOAG – The Way Out LP + 7

MATT BADENHOP

- MÜLLTÜTE – 12"
- THE STOPS – Nameless Faces LP
- NIEGALO TODO – demo
- G.L.O.S.S. – Girls Living Outside Society's Shit EP
- PLEASURE LEFTISTS – The Woods of Heaven LP
- MIETTIIN – "Yksi Miljoonasta / Puoliksi Maan Alla"
- URBAN SAVAGE – Cop Riot EP
- LA MISMA – Kanizadi LP
- LÄHTEVÄT KAUKOJUNAT / S&M – split EP
- G.L.O.S.S. / BEAST / NO STATIK – live

WILL BLOMQUIST

- ESCASEZ – live
- TOM AND BOOT BOYS – live
- TERKOS – live
- LIŁITH – live
- SWORDWIELDER – live
- EXTRACTION – live
- KORROSIVE – live
- FLOWERS AND FIRE – live
- STRANGE FACES – live
- BUTCHER BOYS – live

MITCH CARDWELL

- L. VOAG – LP + 7" / MILK FROM CHELTENHAM – LP
- AUSMUTEANTS / LUMPY & THE DUMPERS – flexi
- HUNCHES – "You'll Never Get Away With My Heart" 45
- CHROME REVERSE – Yeah Yeah, We Are… EP
- HIEROPHANTS – Parallax Error LP
- DON HOWLAND – Life Is a Nightmare LP
- ROYAL HEADACHE – High LP
- SUNDAY PAINTERS – both LPs
- L.O.T.I.O.N. – Digital C.A.M.O. LP
- FLOWERS OF EVIL – 12"

ROBERT COLLINS

- HEAT DUST – LP + live
- LIFES/SUFFERING MIND – split EP
- ANTI-CORPOS – Forma Práctica De Luta EP
- G.L.O.S.S. – EP + live
- MILD SHAG – demo
- THE BODY + THOU – joint set live
- EXIT ORDER – Take the Bait EP / GLUT – demo
- SIDETRACKED / TO THE POINT – split EP
- RHIZOME – live /INGRATE – demo
- L.O.T.I.O.N. – Digital C.A.M.O. LP

LAYLA GIBBON

- G.L.O.S.S. – Girls Living Outside Society's Shit EP
- BEEF JERK – Tragic LP
- EXIT ORDER – Take the Bait EP
- AUSMUTEANTS / LUMPY & THE DUMPERS – flexi
- DEPARTMENTSTORE SANTAS – LP
- PLEASURE LEFTISTS – The Woods of Heaven LP
- L. VOAG – LP+7" / MILK FROM CHELTENHAM – LP
- X_X – CD / DON HOWLAND – LP
- CENTURY PALM – "Valley Cyan/Accept"
- SPRAY PAINT – Dopers LP

DAN GOETZ

- Q / ZOTZ / ORDEN MUNDIAL / UNA BÈSTIA – live
- EXIT ORDER – EP and live
- G.L.O.S.S. – EP and live
- AUSMUTEANTS / LUMPY & THE DUMPERS – flexi
- MOZART – demo and live
- MONGOLOID – Slug Boy EP
- HUNCHES – "You'll Never Get Away With My Heart" 45
- L.O.T.I.O.N. – Digital C.A.M.O. LP
- DAME – demo and live
- LATEX – EP / THE STOPS – LP

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TOP 10

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GREG HARVESTER

- MÜLLTÜTE – 12"
- LA MISMA – Kanizadi LP
- L.O.T.I.O.N. – Digital C.A.M.O. LP
- RATS REST – Permanent Catastrophe EP
- G.L.O.S.S. – Girls Living Outside Society's Shit EP
- SPRAYPAINT – Dopers 12"
- THE STOPS – Nameless Faces LP
- MOZART – demo
- ANCIENT FILTH – demo
- RUSSIAN TSARLAG / GNARDS / THE EX – live

KENNY KAOS

- THE YOLKS – "Don't Cry Anymore" 45
- THE FRESH & ONLYS – Early Years Anthology LP
- CENTURY PALM – "Valley Cyan/Accept"
- CHROME REVERSE – Yeah Yeah, We Are… EP
- LÄHTEVÄT KAUKOJUNAT / S&M – split EP
- HUNCHES – "You'll Never Get Away With My Heart" 45
- THE PACK – LP / FLOWERS OF EVIL – 12"
- THE STOPS – LP / HIEROPHANTS – LP
- THE CLITBOYS – We Don't Play the Game EP
- HIEROPHANTS – Parallax Error LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- CHROME REVERSE – Yeah Yeah, We Are… EP
- HIEROPHANTS – Parallax Error LP
- DON HOWLAND – Life Is a Nightmare LP
- ROYAL HEADACHE – High LP
- SKEPTICS – Open Sea 10"
- THE JACKETS – Shadows Of Sound CD
- GHETTO GHOULS – Collisions LP
- MIETTIIN – Yksi Miljoonasta / Puoliksi Maan Alla
- L VOAG – LP + 7" / SPRAY PAINT – Dopers LP
- SUNDAY PAINTERS – both LPs

RAY LUJAN

- CENTURY PALM – "Valley Cyan/Accept"
- DARK MATTER – Blind Faces EP
- NIGHT BIRDS – Mutiny At Muscle Beach CD
- THE FRESH & ONLYS – Early Years Anthology LP
- REGAL – Layer World EP
- THE PACK – LP
- ROYAL HEADACHE – High LP
- SATURDAY'S HEROES – Hometown Serenade CD
- THE STOPS – Nameless Faces LP
- HEX – Poison In The System CD

ROTTEN RON READY

- L.O.T.I.O.N. – Digital C.A.M.O. LP
- EEL – Fuck Off, The Human Insect EP
- F.Y.P.M. – Public Disgrace LP
- LA MISMA – Kanizadi LP
- SELF MADE MONSTERS – Draggin' Our Knuckles CD
- G.L.O.S.S. – Girls Living Outside Society's Shit EP
- THE CLITBOYS – We Don't Play the Game EP
- DISGUSTI – A Thousand Prickly Needles EP
- SPACE LADY – split LP
- HORNSS / LECHEROUS GAZE / ANNIHILATION TIME – live

FRED SCHRUNK

- G.L.O.S.S. – Girls Living Outside Society's Shit EP
- LA MISMA – Kanizadi LP
- EXIT ORDER – Take the Bait EP
- RATS REST – Permanent Catastrophe EP
- L.O.T.I.O.N. – Digital C.A.M.O. LP
- ROYAL HEADACHE – High LP
- AUSMUTEANTS / LUMPY & THE DUMPERS – flexi
- THE STOPS – Nameless Faces LP
- MÜLLTÜTE – 12"
- PLEASURE LEFTISTS – The Woods of Heaven LP

LENA TAHMASSIAN

- AUSMUTEANTS / LUMPY & THE DUMPERS – flexi
- EXIT ORDER – Take the Bait EP
- HEAT DUST – LP
- LÄHTEVÄT KAUKOJUNAT / S&M – split EP
- MAAILMANLOPPU – Täältä Tulee Sota 12"
- ROYAL HEADACHE – High LP
- THE STOPS – Nameless Faces LP
- URBAN SAVAGE – Cop Riot EP
- WILD MOTH – Inhibitor LP
- MIETTIN – "Yksi Miljoonasta / Puoliksi Maan Alla"

ELI WALD

- DEPARTMENTSTORE SANTAS – LP
- L.O.T.I.O.N. – Digital C.A.M.O. LP
- G.L.O.S.S. – EP + live
- SPRAY PAINT – Dopers LP
- THE SUNDAY PAINTERS – 4th Annual Report LP
- LA MISMA – Kanizadi LP
- ROYAL HEADACHE – High LP
- EXIT ORDER – Take the Bait EP
- DISGUSTI – A Thousand Prickly Needles EP
- BEEF JERK – Tragic LP

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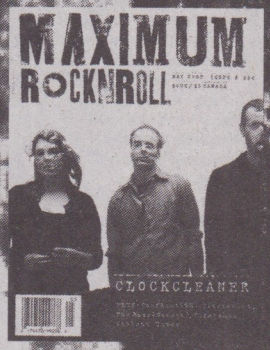


MRR #288/May '07

Features a scene report from East Texas, home of SIN MOTIVO. Or is Ft. Worth in North Texas? Can you surf there? Also included: CLOCKCLEANER, PISSCHRIST, THE RATS (Sweden), CONFLICT (US), THE VILETONES, VIOLENT TUMOR, and a Czech Republic scene report.

MRR #319/Dec '09.

Includes an article on the birth of Finland's hardcore scene, SA-INT aficianados tune in. There's more: THE FIX, SLICES, PINK REASON (Russia/Wisconsin), GANDHI'S COOKBOOK, NODZZZ, BRILLIANT COLORS, SCROTUM POLES, GUN OUTFIT, POSITIVE NOISE, and a photo spread from Goner Fest.

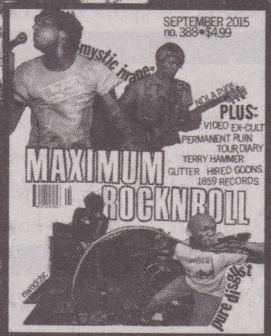
MRR #326/July '10.

Are RANDOM CONFLICT the only other band Alabama that we've covered besides GARY WRONG? This issue also features U-Ron of REALLY RED, SLANG, SEDITION (Scotland), CIRCLE PIT, TRASH KIT, HIGH CASTLE, STREET EATERS, MARCEL DUCHAMP (Chile), MEHKAGO NT, BUNNYSKULLS and scene reports from Calgary and New Orelans.

RECENT BACK ISSUES:
MRR's Latest and Greatest

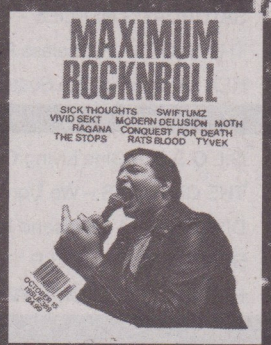
MRR #387/Aug '15

SHEER MAG from Philadelphia, São Paolo's CADAVER EM TRANSE, Madrid's JUANITA Y LOS FEOS, the singular mind behind BUCK BILOXI AND THE FUCKS / GIORGIO MURDERER, France's reunited NO-TALENTS, Stockholm's DATA CONTROL, and reflections on growing older in punk from Bob Suren and the VICTIM PARTY, plus photos from Boston's Smash It Dead fest.



MRR #388/Sep '15

MYSTIC INANE from New Orleans, Texas's VIDEO, Memphis's EX-CULT, DC's PURE DISGUST, Toxic Reasons' manager and first wave SF punker TERRY HAMMER, HIRED GOONS from Canada, Greece's GUTTER, 1859 RECORDS, and a PERMANENT RUIN euro tour diary.



MRR #389/Oct '15

Baltimore's teen hatethrob SICK THOUGHTS, an East Asian tour diary from CONQUEST FOR DEATH, Portland's VIVID SEKT and the STOPS, the Bay Area's own SWIFTUMZ, RATS BLOOD from Ireland, Danish dark punks MOTH, Croatia's MODERN DELUSION, and Oakland's RAGANA.

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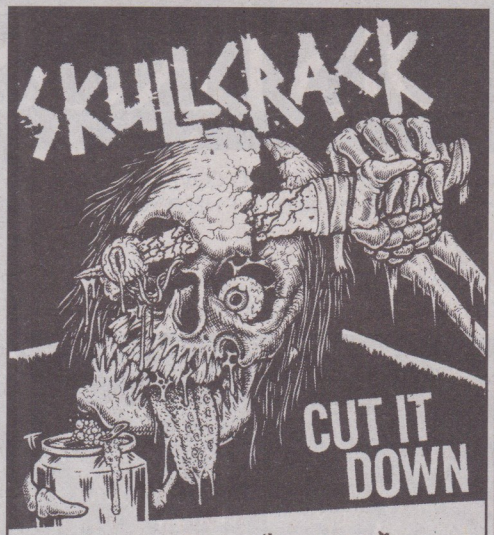

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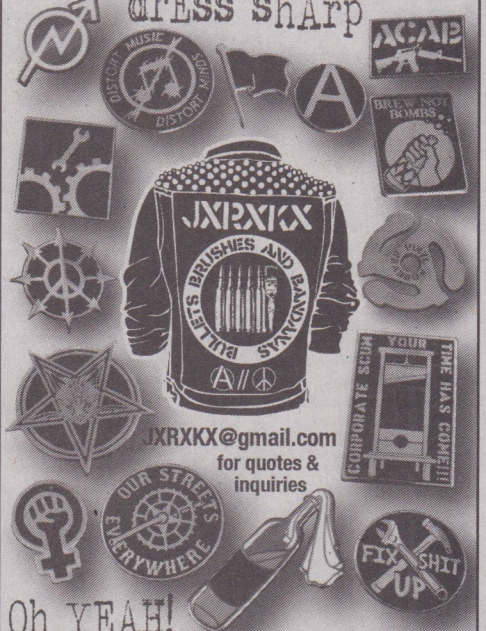

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LETTERS

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Fellow Punks,

Punk and hardcore is no place for vanguardism. One of the indisputable pillars of punk is that anyone can create it and anyone can participate. This does *not* mean that we all have equal access and opportunities, or that we are all equally reinforced by our communities. However, it is wrong for certain *self-appointed leaders* to decide that they have *given you* a voice. It is wrong for people to tell you that "historically" punk scenes have not included people like you. This defaulted *erasure* of the contributions in early punk by women, queer, non-white and gender non-conforming people...who does it serve? Does it serve those who they fear are marginalized or does it further marginalize people in an attempt to make them take on the political struggles that have been deemed appropriate for them?

Not all self-appointed leaders are inciting this response. Some have just become figureheads, who we see as *paving the way* for others. I encourage you to celebrate the people in punk who have come up against incredible obstacles. I encourage you to interrogate the mentality that we need them as heroes and martyrs, without whom we would never have imagined being able to find a space in punk for ourselves. *If punk is not empowering you, it is failing to serve its purpose*. Every single person has the same right to self-determination in punk and hardcore.

No one has all the right answers. No one has the ideas to represent all of us. The great majority of punk lyrics, zines, and speeches are not politically nuanced. Your potential to be profound stems from your personal experience and your reaction to the world around you. The sentiment of a real person's raw dissatisfaction with the world is more meaningful than consumer art featuring a calculated subversion of "society" or "capitalism." The nature of their distribution dictates that they are necessarily sanitized, that they are not dangerous.

In our authenticity, we are profound! We lose this power when we defer to punk "idols." No one else feels for you, no one else bleeds for you. No one needs to speak for you.

"Your self determination is more important than your life...make your own decisions, be true to your own goals. It's better to die than to live a fucking lie."

Your friend,

Rachel Rachel Rachel Rachel

MRR,

-Went to Taco Bell and our driver told us to order "diarrhea for a dollar." And that's exactly what happened. Thanks to all cool people we met in Canada/the USA, especially to Steve "Up the Punx Tabarnak" Bennett.

— Pää Kii

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COLUMNS

"I like, meditate, so I can talk, or not talk, for weeks."
— One of my new upstairs neighbors who acts like he is living in a dorm and is a little afraid of Oakland

"White boy, don't cry,
Don't laugh, just die!!!"
– Bikini Kill, "White Boy"

R.I.G.H.P.F.B.P. Basil (Rest in Glorious Hot Punk Femme Bitch Power Basil)

Indigo is a bartender, a writer, and a self-identified crazy kid from Oakland, and one day she wants to own her own bar where the only rule is that if any woman or any queer person wants a straight cis guy to leave, he has to leave, no questions asked. Even if the reason is, "I don't like the way he talks about beer" or "I don't like his snotty face." Plus, obey the sign. The sign behind Indigo reads, "No Fake Deep."

I had not heard of Fake-Deep until Indigo said it, but it made immediate sense. You see, Fake Deep is when a white man tries to lay some knowledge on you about his deep, esoteric, glowing phallic spirituality and combined Hinduism, Zen, Sufism, Mysticism, alchemical, and tarot-interpreting abilities. Then, the same day, he gets up in your face, screams at you and threatens you because you ruined his party with his new, young subletters, because you came outside while they were in the middle of some offensive joke and asked if they could be quieter. Fake deep is when you can talk the talk about being a spiritually enlightened person, but you are not being truly honest or right with yourself, cannot be called on your shit, and are generally using "deep topics" to manipulate people, to gain followers, or to hit on women at bars. Not that those aren't all noble and lucrative pursuits, sir!

I'm certainly not talking about just one kind of person here. I grew up with a mystic and scholar father, a person who has a beautiful heart, a sound mind, but can, yes, be both Fake Deep and real deep at once. I attended Kindred Spirits Festivals and had slumber parties in rooms used for meditation and chant circles at a place called Mt. Eden, at which my dad was the token POC groundskeeper. More and more as he gets older, we can talk about the intricacies. My dad describes Fake Deep as who people think they are, rather than who they really are.

I have seen a lot of Fake Deep in my life. I have experienced all sorts of violations by people claiming deep status, like women who claimed I was so sexual because of the way I drew my favorite goddesses or men who claimed they could heal my legs with their faith. Different from the Indigo who brought me "Fake Deep," I was called an indigo child by many a pendulum-holding white person. Responding in part to my smallness, brownness, and disabledness, but also to my receptivity, they said I had powerful angelic energy. They said you could tell a person touched by an indigo child by the dark blue rings around my brown-eyed father's pupils. I'm not sure I could ever see the ring, and I'm not sure he could either, but his mother had blue eyes, and we laughed.

Fake Deep does not only manifest in appropriated spiritualisms. I have experienced Fake Deep in radical communities immersed in critical theory, whether gleaned from ivory towers, illegally downloaded PDFs, or xeroxed zines. Someone brain humps you on a first date? Is it a date if we just ran into each other at the Anarchist Bookfair after meeting on Facebook/Okcupid and you have a partner who keeps calling you? Someone makes you read Deleuze to them aloud while they push your wheelchair around the East Village. Or your ex, who once told you that you were a dark otherworld pre-nihilist post-future manifestation of Hothead Paisan, Delirium, and the new moon Hecate, whom she summoned into existence whilst doing a ritual on acid.

I cannot tell you how many white people have told me they dreamed me. Or drunkenly slurred, at the bar where Indigo currently works, while refusing to move their stools so that I could pass, how their relative uses a wheelchair. It gave them a deep understanding of the disabled struggle and to see me just makes them want to pick me up and carry me around 'cause you know, they carry their aunt sometimes.

What has made me so susceptible to Fake Deep in the past, just like other forms of abuse, is my openness. And the fact that I can't help noticing that sometimes, during a Fake Deep encounter, real deep fills in around the ludicrous edges. But I can't stick around waiting for the real deep to show up.

Especially not with a stranger who offends me for 20 minutes and who I am not obligated by blood or money or blood money to keep talking to. The differences between Fake Deep and real deep are vulnerability, sensitivity, and the ability to listen. I want to make it very clear, I love to cry when I am moved by music, hormonal, or just plain sad; I am a magic practicing person and believe in a certain kind of god; and I love critical theory, poetry, and some academic hodgepodge, so I am not saying that all of these things are Fake Deep in and of themselves. What is Fake Deep is when you start, nonconsensually, to try to teach me about some shit that you don't even know as much about as you pretend, in the form of a non-interactive soliloquy that you somehow think will convince me that you are profound, that I am lucky to have met you, that you understand the roots of both the sacred and the profane, that you can see who I really am, that we should have sex.

When someone is actually beautiful and deep with you, they will listen to you. They will let you talk. They will be sensitive to the direction the conversation is going. They will ask questions. They will share things that actually move them and that make them vulnerable to you. Also you will probably not have the urge to describe your conversation as "deep." That's what Fake Deep burners listening to psytrance say. The only time I have ever said, "Shit that's deep!" was when I was surprised by an oogle who had passed out and woken up to say something beautiful. Or maybe when I read *Frog and Toad Are Friends* as a child, and then again, recently.

With my queer family and friends, I hope to create rooms and spaces in which we can be vulnerable and honest about ourselves with each other. Spaces in which we can truly say, "I'm worried about you," or "I'm excited about this thing that might be a terrible idea," or "I'm scared to accept cool shit happening in my life," or "I don't know how to keep doing what I was doing now that my friend has died." We all go through so much. Especially low-income queer and trans/disabled/people of color surviving in cities. The Bay has always been the home of

both real deep geniuses and fake deep creeps. But I'm just gonna act like the sign is already up. Cuz fuck knows if we'll ever legally own anything anyway, and we don't need bullshit in the meantime. No Fake Deep!

Inaccessibility Shout-Out: Burlesque from the Margins for inviting me on tour, then uninviting me from tour within 24 hours of getting together with me to talk about it. I literally didn't even know that such blatant ableism was allowed. I recognize that money for tours is limited. But if you realize you don't have enough money to accessibly and safely take five people up I-5, you reassess the tour, and you start asking if other people can help you throw down, you don't uninvite the most recent addition and the most complex set of access needs from the mix. I was kind and patient on the phone, and doled out advice on how to not do this to somebody in the future and shit. That being said, does anyone drive from the Bay to Seattle on a regular basis and wanna work something out before I jump on another diversity wagon?

Mosswood Park for having a semi-accessible amphitheater but no accessible bathrooms. If you don't want disabled people to piss in public, as they have clearly done, as evidenced by some federal charges this summer, then provide accessible public bathrooms. It's not that hard.

Accessibility Shout-Out: Ion and the Oakland Comic and Zine Fair ensured a wheelchair accessible space and asked that folks come fragrance free for our Monster Mash! We'll see how it goes, but I hope you (reading this a month later) stopped by for cool art and cool performances and um, a screening of the new *Mad Max*?

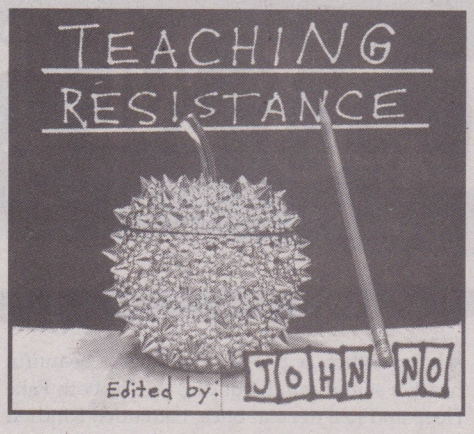
Endnotes:

1) I've been listening to a lot of Vagabon, Soppors, Told Slant, Terry Callier, and Nina Simone, whatever that means. I've been feeling sad and real deep down good love.

2) Email me to add to in/accessibility shout-outs and to become a part of an access squad.

3) Access is more complex than just wheelchair accessibility! It's good to ask your attendees to come fragrance free, especially if you are booking/hosting a small space, and to let folks know if there will ASL interpretation/visual interpretation, and whether there are likely to be flashing lights, for those who might have seizures or chronic brain injuries. *MRR* and other punks, add access notes to flyers!

4) My dear friend Basil died on September 24 and she is/was one of the coolest, sweetest, hottest, kindest, most talented punks I've ever known. She once asked me, for picking me up purposes, whether I was traveling with my power or analog wheelchairs, and then apologized saying she could never remember the word "manual," but honestly, I really like "analog chair" now. I love you, grrrl. The above Bikini Kill quote was from a song she wanted to cover in a riot grrrl band with Rybree and Ruby.



Fall 2015 marks a decade since Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast. While the hurricane itself was destructive, the real damage and high death toll came during Katrina's aftermath, particularly in the city of New Orleans, where the forces of exploitative capitalism and total failure of governance resulted in a truly monstrous outcome.

This month's column details how the legacy of Katrina created an opening for corrupt forces of educational privatization, in the form of largely-unregulated charter schools, to commandeer the public education system in the most-impacted areas—predominantly communities of color plagued by persistently high levels of poverty.

Writing from New Orleans, Robert Reynolds has been working with young people for thirteen years and is in his seventh year as a full-time classroom teacher. He has taught History and English at different alternative, public, private and charter high schools across Chicago, Houston, and New Orleans. Contact Robert directly through his email: room10101@hotmail.com.

The Big Takeover of New Orleans

There's no place like New Orleans. I've heard this statement repeated endlessly and have even made it myself. It can be a compliment. It can also be an implied or inferred smear. It just depends upon who's doing the speaking and who's doing the listening. New Orleans, LA, is home to almost 370,000 people, nearly 100,000 fewer than in 2004, before Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast. That notorious event altered the city's future.

New Orleans's history is tumultuous: seeped in corruption, the largest incarcerator on the planet, a long time capital of the United States' slave ports, murder, overt political seediness (e.g. David Duke), police abuse, intense poverty, racism, class struggle, and home to the largest slave revolt in United States' history.

The Crescent City is also home to the U.S. foundations of jazz music, Creole culture, the first free black residential neighborhoods, and a long-running tradition of incredible integration as well as stark segregation. Regardless of where citizens may land on these spectra, the people of New Orleans retain a resiliency and a level of hustle that is so incessant outsiders often wonder how it's possible to stay so positive and hopeful amid so much official deceit and plunder.

In 2004, New Orleans's dropout rate was 70% and today, disgustingly, it boasts the highest worldwide incarceration levels. This city and its poorer working class have never received much from the status quo, even though the majority of U.S. drilled oil is from the banks of the Gulf of Mexico. For those who look to Louisiana for their shadowy business, Katrina and its aftermath brought perfect opportunities for "The Shock Doctrine," disaster capitalism, and Chicago School of Economics' financiers, under the philosophy of Milton Friedman.

After the storm, Secretary of Education and regular Chicago dartboard target, Arne Duncan, made the now-infamous statement that the "best" thing to happen to New Orleans's educational system was Hurricane Katrina. It was obvious to most working citizens that this statement was made out of salivating opportunism and glaring greed. Despite Duncan's shiny smiles and his promises of education for all, most thinking people were fully aware that the wolf was in the henhouse.

Since Hurricane Katrina, thousands of younger, whiter, less-experienced, and alternatively accredited teachers have replaced the 7,500 predominantly black and unionized teachers who were illegally fired right after the storm. At the time, many in the media argued that the firings resulted from a failing system that was in need of reorganization. Arne Duncan and the lobbying group ALEC argued for a privatized charter school system with fewer oversight regulations. Unions could be turned away and the charter owners could be freed of financial regulations.

Since the inception of charter schools decades ago, spaces have been mindfully built with ideas of community and arts integration, in order to make good use of all-inclusive educational philosophies. Only recently did the world of privatized business interests begin to use charter schools in their business models. After 2005, charter schools began to pop up all over the Gulf Coast.

After only a few years of study, many of the unsavory details of privatization's mishandling of school funds became apparent. Nonetheless, charters marched ever forward. Despite a billion dollar class-action suit and legal victories for some of the fired teachers, most would not be back. A swift takeover occurred in New Orleans on the tail end of the storm. In many ways, New Orleans is a Petri dish for the privatization experiment.

Companies like Teach For America (with financial ties to the Walton family, among countless others) are corporate entities that have supported alternative certification in order to quickly transform recruits of their programs into "teachers." In the last two years, 96,300 people became teachers in the US. Nearly one-tenth of them were recruited by TFA. The majority of TFA recruits get planted in lower-income communities and lower-performing schools. 619 entities in the US provide alternative, fast-track certification for people to enter the classroom as full-time teachers who have little-to-no experience.

Typically, a recruit in an "alt-cert" program does a six-to-eight week in-service, teaches in a school for a year, and is rated favorably by superiors within the school and the respective programs. All recruits are required to pay a large tuition fee.

On the contrary, most highly qualified veteran career educators go through a four-year education program, with a student teaching practicum, before they teach under the guidance of their mentors. Beyond that, many of them fulfill a Master's program and regular certifications and accreditation.

Recruits in alt-cert programs often sign contracts that allow them to be farmed out to various locations. Some alt-cert programs require a recruit to stay in teaching for one to two school years. Then they may leave the teaching profession. Sometimes, though, recruits fulfill their initial time requirement in the classroom, and are hired for administrative positions, sometimes tripling their salary. In fewer than seven years, a novice teacher can become a full-fledged principal.

Another problem is that more often than not, recruits are sent to serve communities that they know nothing about. Recruits are sent to states, cities, schools, and neighborhoods where they do not know the culture or the people. They are neither expected nor prepared to become involved in any other way than to show data that "proves" student achievement. Are these recruits sent to affluent areas or predominantly white environments? No.

To be fair, some teachers go through alt-cert programs after they have taught in alternative or private schools for years, when state certification is a new requirement. These situations comprise a small minority of enrollment in alt-cert programs. It is also true that some recruits fulfill requirements from their alt-cert programs, stay in the teaching profession for countless years, and make tremendous impacts with scores of young people. Unfortunately, these types of recruits are also few and far between.

Companies with these recruits are superficially set up to "save" "underprivileged" populations under the falsely philanthropic banner: "Every student can learn." These types of charters often refer to themselves as "No Excuse Model" schools, in order to suggest they allow "no excuses" for data that does not show student growth. If a school does not show enough growth, it will be closed and another charter will be purchased.

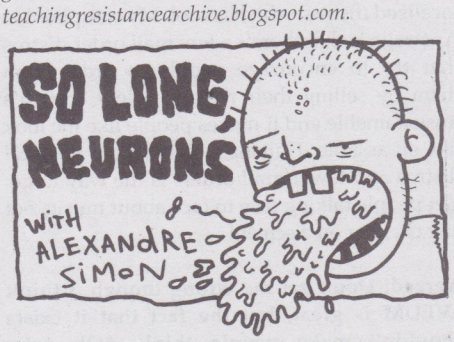
Despite philanthropic involvement, many charters allow their boards discretion in allocation of funds. This laxity opens the door to financial corruption. Who feels the negative effects most? Students, teachers, their families, and the community. Many teaching recruits fold under the pressures that are created by such scenarios. If a recruit quits for any reason, he/she still must continue to pay tuition. Millions are made by the alt-cert companies every year on thousands of new recruits who quit due to insufficient resources, unrealistic preparation, and lack of support.

So, who do these programs really serve? Neighborhood schools no longer exist in New Orleans. Millions are spent out of budgets every year to bus students out of their neighborhoods, all across the city to different schools, filled with other students in confusing and sometimes dangerous logistical circumstances. Many students wait for the school bus at 5:30 am, only to start class hours later. By the time they arrive, many are already understandably exhausted. More pressure is put on the teacher to show favorable results, or to be fired. After all, Louisiana is a "right-to-work" state.

More often than not, this equation comes out fine for investing disaster capitalists and their shareholders. Oil companies like BP and Exxon have gotten involved in education. Banks like Chase and Capital One have gotten involved in education. Every year, the US spends about $500 billion on education from ages 5-18. In 2011, a single year's profits in K-12 education reached $389 million for investors.

The overall data for New Orleans has shown, quite clearly, that when 80% of the schools in New Orleans were charters, about three years ago, 56% were graded D or F. Since Katrina, 4 of the 107 schools could report operating above the state's average. Statistics show that most New Orleans high school seniors did not meet the ACT's state-college acceptance requirement, and that therefore new college students must pay for remedial classes that do not count toward graduation. Since 2010, New Orleans' Recovery School District (RSD) has closed more than twenty schools. In fact, only minorities of charter schools around the nation outperform district schools. This clearly exposes, with its own data, that the corporate charter monopolization of the public school system is ineffective.

The Teaching Resistance column is designed to provide a platform for radical, punk-affiliated, subversive teachers/educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education. If you are a teacher (anywhere in the world) of students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), community colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write an email to teachingresistance@gmail.com. This column's archive is online at teachingresistancearchive.blogspot.com.



A few days ago I was bored at work, so I checked out the No Patience blog. For the uninitiated, No Patience is a record label and distro from Adelaide, South Australia. It's run by Lewis, who used to play in the Bloodclot Faggots (a post-Formaldehyde Junkies band, influenced by S&M, clean guitars and the meeting of HR and the Big Boys), the Vaginors (a post-Wankys band, influenced by Devo and the sound of dental surgery), and is currently jamming in Rule Of Thirds (a goth band I don't know too much about, since I'm too down to listen to such music most of the time).

One of the posts on the blog caught my attention, so let's talk about it for a bit. It featured a picture of a happy-looking fella in his mid-thirties/early-forties, well-dressed in a working-class guy next door style but super clean, white teeth and blonde hair, carrying a big cardboard package in a warehouse that's full of them. On the package it's written "handle with care," making it obvious that the picture comes from some big Amazon-type website—it was shot and uploaded to reassure customers that their packages were handled by professionals who treat their work as some labor of love, or some bullshit like that. Under the picture, Lewis had written the following:

"Just a heads up… NO ONE doing a punk label or distro looks like this. For 99% of people it is a hobby they do in addition to working a job. Most people operate them from their bedroom where the records sit crammed between their bed and their wardrobe, or whatever other tiny amount of space they may have free. They work late at night when other people are relaxing. They do it because they love punk, they love the community, they love records, or whatever other reason. Most do not do it for money BECAUSE THEIR IS NO MONEY IN UNDERGROUND MUSIC.

"Please stop expecting punk to be some sort of amazon.com experience; it's not and it shouldn't be. Fuck that. Keep underground music run by kids in their bedrooms for the love of it. Keep it ugly and keep it real.

"If you want to buy obscure punk records pressed in tiny quantities for zero profit don't expect them to come from some big clean warehouse where your order gets picked by a man on a forklift and lovingly kissed before being packed in a fair trade organic 100% recycled cardboard box. It's fucking unrealistic."

My instant reaction when reading this was to scream "Fuck yeah!" and to throw a brick in the face of my 60-year-old-coworker, instantly followed by the idea of sending Lewis a couple questions about it. As a matter of fact, I had planned to write about this subject in this space, but couldn't find an angle, so thanks goes to Lewis for writing my column for me. Nevertheless, it seems that professionalism in punk is a timely subject if there ever was one. Of course there have always been professional punk distros, bands, labels, etc., i.e. people trying (and sometimes achieving) to live off this strange music, but the odd thing today is that even the non-professional distros, bands and labels seem to really want people to think they're professionals…It's as if, suddenly, doing things from the heart wasn't as cool as doing it for the cash. Anyway, here's my short discussion with Lewis on the subject.

Hey man, what made you write this post? I assume it's bad experiences you've had with annoying "customers," but have you seen a change in recent years? Is it getting worse? I've been noticing that people are much more demanding when they order on Discogs than when they order directly from a small punk website or distro list, for instance.

I think people are definitely more demanding with their orders than they were in the past. I've been running a distro for nine years and buying from distros before that. When I started ordering records from around the country it was all based on lists and sending cash in the mail. There was no way to hear most of the titles before you ordered them, so I depended a lot on the descriptions and the individual taste of the person I was ordering from. Today I think buying underground music is a lot more fast-paced. Generally speaking there is an expected level of professionalism in buying anything online that I don't believe was there in the past, and I don't just mean music, but almost every niche product is held to a high consumer standard.

I guess the question is: Is this a bad thing? Is this bad for punk? Is this capitalism gone mad within our underground community? Does it matter at all? The answer is probably "yes" as much as "no," but I think for me the crux of the discussion rests on the place of *convenience* in punk. I think underground music is moving from a music of inconvenience increasingly to a music of convenience and the consumer attitudes reflect that.

When I say "a music of inconvenience," I mean that, for a long time I think punk used inconvenience as a buffer from mainstream music and mainstream attitudes. Poor production techniques, distasteful artwork, sticking with outdated formats, etc. These have been used to keep punk inaccessible to more mainstream audiences, and avoid dilution. The internet has however effectively minimized this inconvenience, and along with a complete splintering of underground culture, has built an expectation that all things are and should be accessible at the click of a button.

I cringe when I see bands put their records up to stream online sometimes months before the physical product is available. It ruins the mystery for me. I don't listen to it. I try my hardest to ignore it! Partially I think this is because I am somewhat of a luddite, but also because I believe the inconvenience of underground music is important to appreciate. It takes musicians so much time and energy to craft songs, build their scenes, tour, play, practice, everything. And we want to access it all instantaneously with little to no investment from our end other than the click of a button and the swipe of a card. It's complete bullshit. I'm not trying to be exclusive, but I would like people to appreciate and involve themselves in the inconvenience of underground music. It's a special thing. To consume music with such a clinical, fast food approach seems distasteful to me.

But look, I'm getting off the topic. I think a lot of people in underground music use "professionalism" as a tool to have people take what they're doing seriously—"We have twitter, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Tumblr… Take us seriously!" You know what I mean? I think it's a reflection of our increasingly fractured culture. Bands have to scream to be heard and many are exploring methods of gaining attention more commonly practiced by the mainstream music industry. In itself not a crime, but it reinforces some of the frustrating and demanding attitudes we're talking about here. I'm not a professional operation. At times I present myself as such, but at the end of the day running a label and distro is a project of passion and, outside of the opportunities it has brought me, I do not make a cent from it. Keep punk underground, and for the love of underground culture and music!

Ok, I feel that in Europe there are fewer and fewer small punk mail orders and people order more and more from the same "big" places. What do you think about that? Is it the same in Australia? Why do you feel that small "one guy in his bedroom" type mail orders are important?

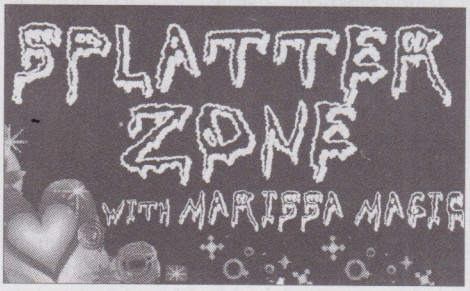
Hmmm…Maybe we have different opinions on this. I am a firm supporter of tiny physical distros, but to be honest, I don't think there need to be a million tiny mail orders. There's no point. They're often unsustainable in my opinion, especially if most of them have the same titles anyway. I don't like to see one person completely calling the shots, but on the other hand I don't appreciate a pissing-match of multiple little distros all competing for the same share of the "punk market". It's silly. Most "big places" are still just one guy in his bedroom scenarios anyway. Take LVEUM, for example. It's just Paco, you know. He's one of the bigger mail orders, but it's still just him. He does an incredible job. Why not support that?

In Australia I would say there's been an increase in distros around the country because our domestic postage rates are so damn high. It makes more sense to buy things from a small local distro at a gig and save on postage. So no, there hasn't been a move towards the same few "big places", but more towards smaller localized distros, which is cool. My complaint in Australia is that there's a few mail order distros that try to encourage people to order from them by selling their records below cost. It's unsustainable and it makes people like me look like an asshole. Hahaha. I think more physical distros and fewer mail orders is the way to go. Get people talking face to face about music, not just clicking on a screen!

Agreed! Don't get me wrong though, I think LVEUM is great, but the fact that it exists shouldn't make people think, "Oh, why would I bother starting a distro? Someone else is already doing it." In France there used to be a distro that was almost as big (Burn Out/ Shogun Records), but it closed and no one really took its place, and now we need to order from another country, pay more shipping, etc. Anyway, I'd go on but space is limited, so I'll just ask if you've got any upcoming projects with your label/bands?

Too many things happening to name them all! Bands, tours, records. It never stops! Thanks Alex!

nopatience.org



About two months ago I broke out in a rash that looked like the one on my back from a couple years ago, the one of the one times I felt weird about my body yadda yadda. The rash grew and felt like it was taking over and I convinced myself I was going to die; that it was the deadly lamictal rash and I went to the emergency room. The process was fast. I took of my shirt and replaced it with a front opening gown. I sat on a hospital bed in a small partitioned room, listening to someone explaining in broken Spanish that this patient was probably fine, it was probably just a pulled muscle. I sat there feeling like a pile of dirt slime. A doctor named Glasscock pulled back the curtain introducing herself and asking to see the rash. I opened up the gown and lifted my breasts.

"Oh, that's fungal."

Since I've been unemployed more and more I make weird complex meals and draw doodles and watch *X-Files*. I'm watching the *X-Files* dipping into layer upon layer of freaky diseases and alien abductions and government conspiracies and this rash is spreading and my skin felt reptilian. Am I being tested by the government through the water supply or will bugs start bursting through my pores? The doctor suggested I eat less carbs so I made a pizza with a cauliflower crust. But for real, beyond that I'm a bread lover and can't figure out how to eat without it so I've just replaced everything with salami. Salami cheese sandwich (no bread), scoop baba ganoush with salami boat, wrap salami around clumps of greens.

But the rash. In short, I have a yeast infection under my breasts and the cream they gave me was greasy leaving my chest constantly bathed in a thin layer of gunk, really highlighting that freaky disease *X-Files* storyline. But the grease cream, this reptile skin, and goo combo, and how do you keep your boobs up when a bra feels like salt on an open wound? A mashup of ultra itch, fire, and bleeding out. Boohoo. At first it seemed like it was on the mend and then it blew up again and spread into my armpit. Desperately washing down hippie combos of turmeric and various essential oils and vinegar

and the cream shit and I wonder if I'm making it better or just exacerbating it and every time I smear myself down with a new concoction I dry-heave because it's so disgusting and god does it fucking itch. I found myself asking, "Am I pretty?" over and over again and I was feeling like a greasy mutant and all of my thoughts were focused on some weird bug burrowing into my skin. Or maybe out? I fell asleep watching and I dreamt I was an *X-Files* case. Mulder came down with it but not Scully, no sex dream, it was transmitted by the cream, an international conspiracy like Oryx and Crake.

But the rash, it's almost gone (don't fucking jinx it). But let me comment on healthcare bullshit for a second anyway. I've got no money so I get to be on Medi-Cal and it costs nothing and I don't have to pay for anything. All health shit, all free. It's a dream that shouldn't be so fantasy. This shit should be free all the time for everyone. But then there is this whole section of people who make juuust barely too much to qualify. All of them, that section, if they want any kind of coverage, its all $100+ monthly dues and basically nothing is free. It's awful and insane. Should I feel so lucky that I'm broke and therefore don't have to worry about going to the doctor and not being able to afford it?

This situation of not working (unemployment), of being completely overtaken by art shit, of being deep in love, is pretty great but somehow the great and wonderful seems so mundane. Or storytelling (writing this column) in this state seems so boring. I told someone about having writer's block or maybe just feeling dull and mundane and they suggested I write about music since this is a music magazine (or whatever). In truth there have been multiple times in the last month that I have either listened to a Grateful Dead song, a Devo song (lately it's been "Golden Energy") or that one hit by Nu Shooz for hours on end on repeat. Of course, don't worry, there are times where I get pumped on new bands/records or whatever (as an aside, every job interview I've gone to lately I've managed to say "or whatever" at some point) which usually leads to infinite repeated listens. The Vexx record, forever; Spray Paint record, forever; Palberta over and over, or whatever. However, don't get me wrong or forget, but nine times out of ten really I'm just bored and anxious at which point I crave something familiar and old and repetitious. This Roky Erickson record again and again, Wipers, second side of *My War*.

At one point, my old bandmate was tastelessly fucking my roommate at the time and I was horribly depressed because she (bandmate) was kind of maybe totally a manipulative asshole. To sidetrack for a second, this was a band that felt important and interesting and weird and in a way I hate that it's not happening anymore but I don't mind not playing music with her anymore. But an important point about this is that I was 28 when that band obviously needed to be over but I held on with an iron grip because I was convinced at 28 (28!) that I was a wash up and a failure and this was the last band I would be in. But now I'm in Mozart (the only band that matters) and The Blues and doing other weirdo artsy stuff and in the following years after that band's demise I've done a lot of cool stuff you're never too old yuk yuk.

But anyway, back to five years ago when was sad and my bandmate was flaking on practice to fuck my roommate and so I listened to Neil Young because I was sad and I was listening, endlessly listening to the second side of *On The Beach*. My former bandmate told me later that as I started the same side of the record for the umpteenth time that day, she was laying in bed in bullshit bliss with my roommate and he sighed saying, "Here we go again."

"We struggle for survival right into our graves
Busting our ass for a standard wage
Times are tough and work is hard to find
Its times like these I think I'll turn to crime"
-Templars, "Those Who Build This Country"

"I was trying to get it how I live
I want them dead presidents
I want to pull up, head spent
Get it, get fly; I got six jobs! I don't get tired!"
-Kevin Gates, "I Don't Get Tired"

"The dogs on Main Street howl cuz they understand."
-The Boss, "The Promised Land"

A Cartoon in a Cartoon Graveyard

Another month and another twelve-hundred-ish words! Let's start right off with some Oi!-sacrilege: Being working class sucks. It's a drag. This past month I've been painting a five-story brick building with a Purdy roller. I take a lift 60 feet up, scrape off loose paint and mortar, and then paint out a 3' x 7' square, and then I move the lift and repeat. I do that for about 10 hours. This time next year a drone will be doing my job. And thank god! Fuck this hand-to-mouth shit. Who wants to *work* if they don't have to? I met a wing-nut from West Virginia one time who told me the concept of work was a hostage situation (not like the Donna Summer song). He was a doppelgänger of Jeff Ott and had body odor that was a doppelgänger of Taco-Bell ("Put the soap up under your arm and wash it out"). And even though everything else he said sounded like Appalachian-anarchist gobbledygook, that shit about work stuck in my brain. So I'm jumping out the window and making a run for it. I have a plan: As a smart member of the working-class, I've been putting a good portion of my weekly pay into scratch-off tickets. I'm pretty good at diversifying my portfolio between the $2 quickies (Bacon Bucks, Triple Dip) and the $5 crossword style jawns (and a Beeline Bingo now'n'then). If it's an extra hard week I'll throw down on a $20 ticket; something that's on rave-grade cardstock and as big as a broadsheet. I'm also thinking about getting into dog racing.

So feeling my feelings and knowing what I know, why do I get wrapped up in the fetishism of working class pride? (Not talking about bleachers with zippers in the rear). It's because at times I've got a misconception about my lot in life that's fueled by bitterness and jealousy. It's as if I live inside some '80s cliché in which rich bitches named Blaine and Chaz sneer at me while I'm just trying to get on with my salt of the earth existence. I'm not Hated & Proud. I'm Hated & Unconcerned. But most times, I'm not even Hated. No one is putting the snob on me. Class pride is self-absorbed vanity. Do they owe us a living? No, you dweebs. We are owed nothing. Put on your boots or your all-black Chucks and go to work and shut up. Or don't go to work...but still shut up. Everyone just shut up. Now I'll shut up about non-music related crap. This is a music zine, correct? Bonedigger! Bonedigger!

FACA PRETA – digital EP (Hearts Bleed Blue, Semper Adversus)

The band calls this a 7" on their Facefuck, but I can't find anything regarding a physical release. It's all over the Web, though, so it's kind of an infinity-inch... ∞".Listen to it on Youtube, Bandcamp, or Spotify. It's probably on Brazilian radio too. This shit is catchy and friendly street-punkish music. Listen to this while you comb your beard and straighten out the pins on your clean denim vest. If you miss SWINGIN' UTTERS, or want to hear something that mixes the FORGOTTEN and the No Idea / Gainesville sound, peep this.

MOSSIN NAGANT – CD (Rusty Knife Records, Rumagna Sgroza)

Let's see, if *MRR* is a radio dial, it's mostly tuned into college radio and "Democracy Now!" (Lefty Hooligan is Amy Goodman) and sometimes it's on NPR for "All Things Considered" and Diane Rehm (played by Brace Belden)? I guess that makes me Rush Limbaugh or Glenn Beck? Rush and I probably have the same diet, and I cry as much as Glenn Beck does. And we're all very uncomfortable with Communists. Well, I guess I gotta walk through discomfort, because MOSSIN NAGANT are straight up hammer-and-sickle commie Oi! boys. These *komrades* call the Basque region home and are pink right down to their panties. Named after the Soviet bolt-action rifle, these dudes talk a pretty hard talk. Or so it seems. All the songs are in Spanish, and like most overtly political Oi! I don't care for the lyrics. From the song "Mr. Sam": *"The bulwark of a cruel world / Torturer of valiant men / The murderer of children and women who sponsors bloody invasions / Mr. Sam is subsidizing dictatorships around the globe / Mr. Sam! The enemy of humanity! / Promotes the violent massacres, coups, conspiracies! / Terrorizes all nations are the*

world's largest terrorist." Translated from the Spanish. All I can do is yawn and roll my eyes. But this is *MRR* and I know where my bread is buttered. Lyrics aside, I found myself bobbing my head and doing a little chair mosh two-step. MOSSIN NAGANT does a fine job of mixing oi! with the hooks of 25 TA LIFE style NYHC. It's nothing surprising but it's good and right in line with bands such as COR FORT, MENCER VERMELLO and OPCIÓ K-95.

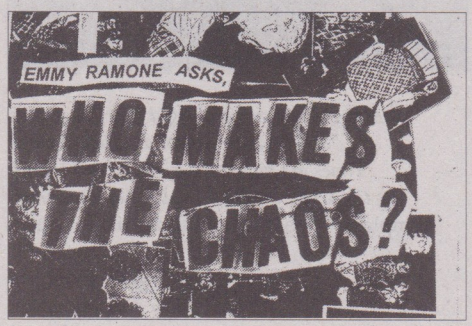
HARRINGTON SAINTS – *Fish & Chips* 10" (Randale Records, Pirates Press Records)
The Bay Area bruisers are back with 7 new songs of rollicking skinhead streetpunk. As soon as the needle dropped on *Fish & Chips*, the Gang was blown away. Like an old Popeye comic-strip everyone in the room fell out their chairs. New roads are not being treaded on this album. But who cares? HARRINGTON SAINTS have honed their style of Oi! to an exacting point; writing and playing strong and memorable albums that keep us flipping the record over and over. *Fish & Chips* kicks off with the song, "Last Call (Skinheads' Wake)": "If I die in my sleep, as I lay in wake / Make sure I'm in Docs and the laces are straight!" Boom! Simple and compelling. Other topics include hanging out eating fish and chips, organized labor, working class life, the threat of the government privatizing social programs, and the poor choices we make when we're young. Other than this being on a 10" it's a great mini-album. Winner.

THE CRUSADERS – *Niebla y Sangre* EP (Fierro! Records)
Toe-tappin-rock'n'oi! from Huelva, Andalusia. A lot of this reminds me of the BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS or SKINFULL. It's mid-tempo and the vocals sound like the singer smokes whiskey and drinks cigars. The tone of the four songs on the EP is tense and edgy. Like bikers getting drunk at the bar. Everything's fine right until it's not. Fierro! Records has been releasing some of the best Spain has to offer: the CORRIGANS, GUNDOWN, AGGRESSIVE COMBAT and STRIKE BACK. The CRUSADERS seem to be right at home on Fierro! Descartamos, ¿de acuerdo?

THE GIFT – *Golden Gate* EP (Golden Gate Records)
French mods? Well maybe not, but that's how the GIFT were sold to me. And it worked! This is top-notch power pop and there is more than a couple blue pills worth of the JAM in the three songs on this little record. The addition of female vocal harmony really seals the deal on this. It's not sweet; ennui, enervation, loss are words that fit, I think. "I can't get no relief / We get consumed by fire and grace / My whole life is grief / We lose control, when we're in that place." Kinda of a bummed-out SECRET AFFAIR. Contains members of the HEADLINERS, THE JANITORS and THE JITTERS. I want more!

I guess that wraps it up for this month. I have some good stuff coming in the mail and have a few things on the back burner I didn't get to this month. More mod? More R.A.S.H.? Some sketchy Brazilian stuff? Yes, yes, a thousand times yes! But we'll see what Grace lets me get away with. Till then! Ears!

ENDNOTES:
1) Ya know, not a single person has had a problem with any of the shit I've put in this column. I'm not fishing for beef, but apparently the public at large is fine with patriotic and nationalist bands being in the pages of *MRR*. Lookit how far we've come, baby!
2) You can thank me at: AmericanBootGang@Gmail.com
3) Why do people *try* and sound like the WIPERS? It's like trying to grow a Hitler mustache. It was a bad idea the first time around.
4) Gonna try real hard to be at Take This Bird and Shove-it Fest.
5) And lastly: As long as the Cubs lose I'll be happy.



Not much on my brain today, *Maximum Rocknroll* readers. I feel like it's been months since I've had a blurb go through my head that I could force into coherence, but regardless here I am trying to wrangle in my thoughts. A few weeks ago I went and saw one of punk's most exciting bands of the last fuckin' decade play their last hurrah—that was no other then the twisted and sonic Brown Sugar. Their first set was at Now That's Class and was full of technical difficulties. I felt my brain growing absent throughout their set, each interruption trying to figure out what was wrong with whatever the fuck they were doing and I felt my awareness drift away. I think the excitement to see one of my favorite bands another time against all odds never had time to sink in or process and despite their numerous problems and rather off sound throughout, I watched the careless bodies crash and fireworks explode in front of me all in tune with the twisted beats of Brown Sugar. It all felt like it was happening in my brain, it was like watching their set was as though I was watching my brain at work. I don't know when I last had a feeling like that at a show, but it was a feeling I had missed.

The second show was at the house next door. At this point it was like 3:00 a.m. and Brown Sugar was way better this time around but my brain had slipped back into the reality and I couldn't find myself in the euphoric state their first set put me in. The looming drive home, the level of tired and drunk the crowd had reached and chosen to ignore, it all set in I guess. As it does when you're at a show in another city at 3:00 a.m. Their set ended rather abruptly as a kid fell to the ground and was lifelessly carried out. That was the end of Brown Sugar, and while I wish watching a kid get lifelessly carried out of a basement wasn't my assumed final memory of Brown Sugar, the night's consistent absurdity was very validating to the band's previous existence. All with an irritating amount of symbolism for the coffee table books of future years.

As fall moves itself rapidly onward, I feel myself and everyone else around me scrambling to gather their sanity before winter kicks us all in the stomach. I just started reading Dee Dee Ramone's book *Lobotomy* and in the first five pages it talks about his mom being forced to bury bodies at the end of the Second World War and him failing the first grade. It's been a dark path so far but I guess I'm along for the ride. I don't know if there is a lull in my brain or in current punk but I haven't noticed much that excites me. I've noticed people quit seeing if band names were taken before naming their bands though—shout out to the the Dark, No Parole, Nub, and the Boys for leading the new punk trend of boycotting google searches. I recently heard a demo by Portland's Ointment and flipped out. It's fantastic, damaged rock and roll music with synthesizers oscillating and twisting their way through the music. I knew the damaged rock and roll Ex Heart Attack Jizzers in them would give them a Cleveland push but the incoherent Ubu lyrical styling and loose Pagans style rock and roll rhythms are too much for little old me. It's like brain overload of sounds I like, the computer-sounding synthesizer, the sonic guitars, the snapping drums, lord help me.

The middle of the country still got it. In Indiana the new band is Dagger, a band with members from very popular Indiana bands but most relevant to this band's sound is Guinea Kid. This is blasted and disgusting hardcore punk, like the Koro's *700 Club* EP or Mecht Mensch's *Acceptance* EP; this tape pounds in hardcore so fast, it begins to topple over itself giving it a whole new sound of raw and distorted. Some of these songs have these low-end riffs that just consume the song, riffs so destructive they seem to overlap the already destructive sounds that have been happening for a few minutes now. The whole demo pushes itself really far, it sounds as if they recorded the songs too many times and when they reached the take found on the cassette they were so frustrated they wanted to play the song twice as fast so they could be done with it. A great tape.

On the other side of Gary in Chicago, there are two bands people will probably never take the time to listen to, the first being Plastic. Plastic is synthesizer punk, synthesizer, drums, and bass, to be exact. With eerie synthesizers they push through sputtering punk songs and highlight song hooks with the insane noises necessary of a punk band with synthesis. Plastic reminds me of Nervous Gender with

their vocals sounding disgusted, and their songs' pounding structure. Great group. Next, Crude Humor plays un-matured noise rock, and rather true Chicago-sounding punk. Taking sputtery sounds of bands like Subverts and Negative Element, the snotty twisted screeches of the Mentally Ill and the receptive nuisances of Big Black. Their new tape *Jeri's Grill* on Not Normal is eight songs long and will fill out all of your annoying punk needs for a while. Highly recommended, especially if you fuck with pre-Big Black Chicago punk sounds.

I think I've just been to busy trying to keep up with all the shit I have going on I haven't had time to seek out that new punk music. I just picked up a bunch of old records I love. Just today I picked up the Metal Urbain collection record, it came out in the '80s I think. Metal Urbain is a French band that sounds like a cross between Throbbing Gristle and the Sex Pistols. With two guitar players, a drum machine, and crunchy synthesizer it flows rather disgustingly. I love it. The hit is "Panik." I also got this DEVO fanclub LP that has a side of demos and a live recording on the B-side that's a gem with a photocopied cover. My Mind's Eye in Cleveland just re-released one of the most disgusting punk releases in Clevo's history, the Numbskull *Final Days Of Torture* and that has my highest recommendation. It comes with a 7", too. My Mind's Eye is also doing a Styrene's box set with another amazing take of "Jaguar Ride" on it!! I've begun working on *Cretins of Distortion* #8 and that'll be done in time for my visit to Nocaz in November, so come punk out New Orleans! If you haven't picked up issue #7 yet you can get that at bugcartel.storenvy.com. It's full of old Ohio punk bands with great names like No Parole and the Dark for your modern punk band to reuse! Next column I'll have way more to talk about, I promise!

i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

by Imogen Binnie

Ragana/Correspondences Tour Diary Part 2

What if I just start using this column as a place to review strains of weed?

Here's the thing: I am bad at letting myself feel pleasure. It's a trans thing: when you learn as a kid that unmediated self-expression is going to be met with resistance because abuse dynamics are a cultural norm and everybody's a fucking gender cop—when you're a toddler and already internalizing the idea that you can't just fucking do what comes "naturally," that you've got to learn to anticipate other people's responses to anything you might do—you learn that just fuckin' doing something because you want to do it is going to end badly. It's a pattern that takes root early on and the thing about patterns like that is that those roots run fucking deep and even when you've identified them and decided that you don't need them any more and you're going to move on, you still find them springing up in places you wouldn't even have expected them to be.

Fuckin' patterns.

This is why, no matter how much I might fucking love weed, and think that weed jokes are fundamentally hilarious, I suck at being a stoner. I can't just get high and listen to Fuck Buttons/Wolves In The Throne Room mashups—as soon as I start to chill out, I also start to fucking panic. I think this might also be a grew-up-in-New-Jersey thing. However! I've also been an insomniac my whole life, but I can sleep if I'm stoned.

I found a fucking loophole, witches.

Which brings us to Baltimore, and to Tahoe OG.

You know how normal body functions go all wonky on tour, at least for a while, until you animorph into a Road Dog and weirdo body functioning just becomes the new normal? We were only on this tour with Ragana for a week, which meant there wasn't even going to be time for my body to become a Road Dog. So I brought hella weed, and smoked every night before bed, because my insomnia is even worse if I'm sleeping on a floor or in a truck or in a haunted schoolhouse on a couch to which I have I tied my beloved dog so she doesn't go bark at ghosts while I'm trying to sleep.

We stayed at this Deep Lez apartment of some friends of Emily's, three Correspondences and two Raganas passed adorably out on a couple mattresses on the floor of a little music room, and one of the Deep Lez friends—who plays in a band I won't name because I don't want to out anybody as a person who sold me weed, even though I am cool and selling (or giving) me weed is cool—was like "I have all this nice weed, do you want to buy some?" What was I going to say, no? I don't know anything about connoisseur shit like strains of weed that have names. This would be a tour adventure!

I bought twenty dollars worth of Tahoe OG and we hung out for a little while and I think it wasn't until a few nights later that I smoked any of it. We left and headed to Philly. On the first day of tour we had invented a game where you had to sing a Live song every time you crossed a state line, but the only Live song any of us knew was "I Alone," so it was kind of a monotonous game, although bellowing like a sensitive new age '90s dude rock guy is a pretty good game.

We got kind of obsessed with Live on this tour, actually. Or I guess obsessed with talking about them. I pirated their greatest hits at one point (Ken Fucking Wilber wrote the liner notes! If you don't know who that is, trust me, it is pretty funny) but it was pretty hard to listen to.

Tour stuff: we also got really into sticking the letter "p" into words that don't have p's in them, like, "Oh this is Lee, she's our drumper." We try to be humorless grim drone doom witch ghouls but we're fucking terrible at it.

We are so goofy.

Which brings me to the actual point of this column, which is this: watching Ragana play made me wish I was less fucking goofy.

We got to see them play six times in seven days and every time they introduce a song they're so vulnerable and real about what it's about that it fucks me up. It's the best. And it's not like they're never goofballs—they missed most of our set at the Boston show because they were jumping on a fucking trampoline—it's just that watching them engage in an un-ironic, direct way with the really serious shit they're singing about in their really serious music made me want to engage with my music in a more serious way, too.

I mean, our music is serious. It's not like Correspondences is a joke band or something—we were really only playing three songs every night on this tour because the most recent thing we'd written is this fifteen minute song called "Frost Heaves." Emily plays a loop pedal toward the beginning and toward the end I do a bunch of black metal screaming. It's awesome and writing it was fun but like, we put a lot of time and thought into it. It's serious stuff.

But if I introduce that song I'm always like "this is a song about the ice death of the earth" and then, like, throw the goat and waggle my tongue or something. Like as if it were a fucking joke, you know? I mean, that is what it's about, it's a song about the far future when the sun's going cold and the earth is dying. But I kind of hate myself for feeling like I need to introduce something we take so seriously in a way that makes it sound like maybe we don't.

I've been doing it for fucking forever, too. There's a recording somewhere of me introducing my old band Angela Chase's song "Consent" like, "this is a song about the time the police beat up Sonya," our drummer, as if that were funny. (It wasn't, and it continues not to be.)

Anyway, by the last night or two of this tour—after I'd seen Maria introduce their song that's about exploitive military dynamics and people mispronouncing her mom's name, and hearing Nicole explain that another is about how "beautiful things are only beautiful because we're all going to die"—I started pushing myself to give un-ironic introductions to our songs.

I think the second to last night of the tour I actually managed to explain more or less articulately that what "Frost Heaves" is actually about is how we all have these frameworks and lenses through which we view the world, and that our culture's dominant framework for understanding things—white supremacist, capitalist, hierarchical, positivist colonialism—is a pretty powerful perspective, and that it does a great job of marginalizing other perspectives, but that even if humans somehow manage to survive far enough into the future that we get to be around when the sun dies, what the fuck is that perspective going to do for us then. It's s a powerful thing but in the end we're still going to fucking die; fuck that way of understanding of the world.

We have another song called, "Cramp Bark, Oat Straw, Rose Hips, Blood," which is probably my other favorite Correspondences song. We've been doing it since we started and it's some of the droniest, doomiest music we've ever done; it was hard to convince Lee to play such a slow, sparse drum part, and for a lot of the song I'm just punching my bass on every one-beat to make the open strings ring out and feed back until we get back to the next "one." And even when I introduce that grim fucking dirge I'm almost always like, "This one's about herbal time travel, lol."

Which is true. That's what it's about, kind of. But it's the joke version of what it's about.

I didn't manage to introduce that one properly until the last show of tour—which I should tell you about next month, because it was so fucking sick that it deserves its own column—but I still felt nervous talking about it, because I actually have a lot of raw feelings about that song and those feelings are a lot safer when I'm not talking about it. But I want to be less of a piece-of-shit hipster, to be more vulnerable than I usually let myself be. I think we played it as the last song of the last show of the tour, and before we played it, I explained that it is actually a song about watching someone you love try to recover from very serious trauma by doing things that you can tell, from the start, are not going to help anything.

It's a song about little blue bottles piling up at the edges of the stairs—calendula and lemon balm tangling up in her hair, because she read somewhere—she can't remember exactly where now, but she is hanging all her hopes on the idea that this might be true—she read somewhere that there's a tincture you can make, some kind of herbal concoction that mixes with your blood to make you come unstuck in time. The last line of the song is, "Sixteen years six months and seven days ago, she needs not to have met you."

Honestly? That song fucking rules and I don't even know if I've ever told the other members of the band what it's actually about. But it fucks me up every time we play it—not that it's about a specific person or incident in my life; I don't think I actually know anyone who believes in herbal time travel. But that thing? Of putting all your energy and hope for wellness on some bizarre, unlikely long shot? That is a thing that happens, and it is a hard thing to watch when you care about someone.

I don't know, man. I guess I just want to thank Ragana for making me want to give more of a fuck about the shit that I do. Also, hey Ragana! We are going to rip you off as hard as we can, next time Correspondences gets together to write music.

ENDNOTES:

1) I started a new band. It might be called Amethysts. I'll keep you posted.

2) The haunted schoolhouse thing happened a couple years ago when Lee and I were teaching at Girls Rock Vermont and then, when everybody went home, sleeping at the school where camp happened. Kelly and Alyssa from cool feminist punk label Stick Shift Recordings totally saw ghosts there.

3) Joke's on you, Ragana—Correspondences missed half your set in Boston because we were jumping on the trampoline, too! You should have seen Emily cracking up—as soon as she started bouncing she was, like, violently incapacitated with laughter. It was awesome, although the joke's on us, too, because while we were on the fuckin' tramp, Ragana played "666," for the first time since we jumped on the tour. That was my first favorite Ragana song! Nicole told me later on that it was the first song they wrote and that it was just like five songs stuck to each other.

4) Bring interesting strains of weed for me to review over to the *MRR* castle in San Francisco and tell 'em to hold it for me till the next time I'm on the west coast. Don't mail it! People get in trouble for that shit! Thank you in advance.

5) Tahoe OG: four and a half blacklight posters of Marilyn Manson out of five

Last month I talked about the Crumbsuckers. I'd like to spend some time talking about crossover. I would characterize the crossover era as that period in the later half of the '80s when a lot of punk/hardcore bands starting taking on a metal influence, and a lot of metal bands started feeding off the speed and intensity of hardcore. Like the early days of crust, I was around for pretty much the whole crossover era, and as something of a participant, I lack the objectivity of an outside observer. That said, I was a teenager, not a mover and shaker in any kind of scene. But, I was very enthusiastic about music and records, following bands, reading zines and going to gigs.

First let's back up a bit and think about how punk and metal come together in the mid '80s. Consider that in its early days, punk came more out of a prog and New Wave direction than metal. People came more from music like David Bowie and Roxy Music than, say, Deep Purple and Black Sabbath. And in the early days of hardcore, I think a lot more people came into the hardcore scene from the New Wave scene than the metal scene. We take the influence of metal so much for granted today, that it's easy to forget there was very, very little influence of metal on the early days of hardcore. You would be much more likely to find people who had discovered punk from listening to Duran Duran or New Order, than from Judas Priest or Iron Maiden. Indeed, much of the rockstar mentality and professionalism the early punk and hardcore scenes were reacting against seemed to be embodied by the showmanship and pomposity of metal. A lot of the early rock critic types who came out of a New Wave and '77 punk background had a hard time grasping the speed and intensity of early hardcore. They used to call bands like Black Flag and Fear "heavy metal" just because they lacked a context for heavy and intense music.

Void is often cited as the first crossover band, and some people have said Void would have played metal instead of hardcore if they had been better musicians. I am not sure about that, but there is a definite metal influence on Void's hardcore. I remember trying to explain this to a friend who was mostly into metal in the late '80s. He replied, "There is nothing metal about this band" so really, the metal influence was pretty minor, but it was a step into this realm for sure.

I think just about everything changed when bands like Metallica came around. Before Metallica took off, most people into punk disregarded metal, but that *Kill Em All* LP seemed to be something of a shot heard round the world, suddenly every band from SSD to MDC was adding a second guitar player, guitar solos and chugging riffs. In just a few years, several of the most popular hardcore bands had gone very deep into metal territory: DRI, Discharge, Broken Bones, Corrosion of Conformity, and Agnostic Front. Some bands that hadn't caused much of a stir as hardcore bands became really known as crossover bands like Accused, Crumbsuckers, and Final Conflict, while some bands that seemed to come more from the metal scene started playing crossover thrash as well, like Excel, Wermacht, and Cryptic Slaughter.

At the time, there was a really mixed reaction to this process. First let's remember that from the earliest days of punk, there was a split between the "art" camp and the "rock" camp. You had Patti Smith and Richard Hell and the Talking Heads coming out of an art school kind of vibe and the Dictators and the Ramones coming more from a garage/bar rock sort of scene which drew in a more working class rocker fan base. In the early days of hardcore, the scene was very, very small and close knit. But as the music spread more and more kids started to show up, especially to see bands like Black Flag, Minor Threat, and Dead Kennedys. The original 1981 first wave hardcore types decried this invasion of suburban hardcore kids, just like the first wave of art school punks decried the Dictators unsophisticated working class fans. But by 1984-85 when the crossover scene started to take off, a lot of the people in the "hardcore intelligentsia" of the time decried the invasion of metal influence and attitudes into punk. I would note, some of the early staff of this magazine were in that camp. Just as the first wave of hardcore decried the violent energy of the suburban hardcore kids who followed them, the whole hardcore scene was kind of split on metal. A big chunk of the old guard decried the commercialism, violence,

machismo and corny rockstar attitudes that were coming into hardcore. In their minds, this was the same establishment hardcore punk had set out to rebel against and deconstruct. On the other hand, a lot of the younger suburban hardcore kids (I was one of these kids) embraced the speed, power and intensity of crossover as something new and powerful.

Some 30 years later, I kind of feel that as much as I love the music, overall, crossover had a negative impact on hardcore. I think the early critics were probably accurate in their analysis that a metal influence would introduce commercialism, machismo, conservative politics, and corny rock star attitudes. This stuff got injected into hardcore and has not really left. I feel about the same way about the internet. It has some really positive aspects, but its overall effect has probably been more negative than positive. That is to say, hardcore would be less commercial, and more socially and politically relevant if metal and the internet hadn't been introduced. Perhaps a "pure" form of DIY hardcore could never really have existed, and I am just blaming the failures of hardcore to live up to its potential on outside forces. But, there is no mistaking that certain energy and excitement of the first five or so years of the hardcore scene, the feeling that things were really moving and the youth were getting restless. That energy has never really come back.

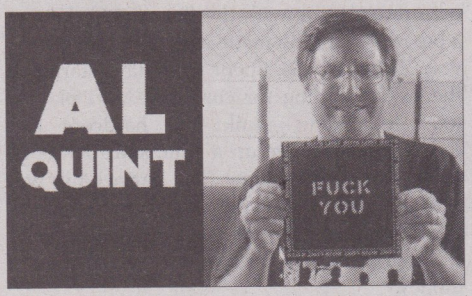
Back to the mid '80s. I remember going to see bands like DRI and COC as thrash/hardcore bands, and then a year later, they came through as more crossover/metal bands. Then soon after records came out with a distinct metal influence on metal labels. This move to metal labels (notably Death and Combat, subsidiaries of Metal Blade and Relativity/Sony) was widely criticized in the underground press and in conversations outside gigs. Many felt that these bands had sold out and compromised their integrity by signing to major metal labels. However, a lot more people were really into the music. Another important thing to remember, is that in 1985 DRI and COC (for instance) were still very popular new bands with a big underground fan base. They had not had 30 more years to embarrass themselves with weak records and lackluster tours. Most people don't take bands like this very seriously today, but back then a band like DRI was the fastest and most powerful popular hardcore band. The *Dirty Rotten* LP was a really big seller and a lot of people were really diehard fans. *Dealing with It* took the band in a more metal direction, but a huge number of people were really into it. But as this band's career progressed, their original hardcore fan base dropped away, only to be replaced by young metalheads, I think this was similar to a lot of bands that "went metal" in this time period. Listening to *Dealing With It* today, it doesn't really sound very metal, but at the time it certainly did.

One of the things that many critics pointed out about the introduction of metal attitudes into hardcore was the violence and machismo. There had been a similar wave of criticism a few years earlier when "violent" suburban hardcore kids introduced slam dancing and stage diving into punk shows. But in the early days of hardcore the majority of the violence was on the streets between norms and punks, and at the gigs it was more like horseplay and goofing off than a real menace. The crossover scene brought the violence into the gigs, there were a lot of goons into this music with a macho attitude who came to shows to hurt people and start fights. *A lot* of skinheads followed this music and bands like Agnostic Front and the Cro-Mags, though they seem well regarded today, had some of the worst fans who introduced some really wack shit into hardcore. I feel like in the early days of hardcore there was a feeling that everyone had to stick together against the persecution from the outside world, before starting to feel really uneasy at gigs because of the massive amounts of Skinheads and other violent types there to pick on the weak. I think some of the crossover bands glorified this macho and violent bullshit much to the detriment of hardcore to this day.

I also feel that the "professionalism" of the crossover scene probably postponed the development of the modern DIY hardcore scene by five years or so. There was a real dependence on music business norms, especially in booking that was geared towards bigger bands on bigger labels with booking agents. Also, the pricing of these crossover records was higher than the more idealistic labels like Dischord and the advertising and promotion were more in line with mainstream metal releases, which left a sour taste in the mouths of a lot of people who had really thought hardcore was going to exist as a subculture independent of the mainstream music industry. Ironically, just a few years later the '90s DIY hardcore scene took off and there was a major reaction against these kind of attitudes and practices.

I managed to write an entire column without actually talking about any records. Next month I will start to dig deep into the vinyl releases themselves. Despite my negative tone about the impact of crossover, I think the music was pretty raging, although many of these releases have not held up quite so well.

There's a crop of new bands and releases from Minneapolis that I'd like to talk about. Fucking is raw and noisy fucked up mutant hardcore; they have a self-released 7". Hive is heavy metallic hardcore that reminds me of bands like His Hero is Gone and From Ashes Rise. They have a demo cassette that comes in a leather slipcase. Mind Control is another kind of noisy, spastic, hardcore band; they have a new 7". Zero plays some pretty traditional sounding Japanese hardcore; they have a demo and two 7"s and recently toured. Uranium Club play post-punk, kind of like early Fall or Wire; their demo was just released as a 12". I think Wild Child and Brain Tumors broke up, not sure what's going on with Condominium. Kontrasekt, I think has some new records and touring in the works.



POLISHING THE OL' RESUME

Despite the fact I juggle a lot of different jobs and projects: writing, two radio shows, and private and online record sales, it's been a long time since I updated my resume, I mean a REALLY long time. I think the last time was in 1993.

I suppose you could say that my work history on LinkedIn qualifies as a resume, and that there's no harm in having my info up there, in case anyone ever wanted to offer me a cushy, high-paying job. I don't use it all that much, though. For LinkedIn, I've only included my music-oriented jobs, my current activities, and record store management experience, which actually ended in 1997. I left out the two miserable years I spent in banking, the convenience and grocery store jobs, newspaper delivery and camp counseling.

I have an idea like something I would have read in *MAD Magazine* when I was a teenager: what if my resume of past jobs told the truth about what those jobs actually entailed? *MAD* would have called it "Resumes We'd Like To See." Mine would go something like this:

SONIC OVERLOAD (March 2000 to present). Producer/DJ. Host of a twice-weekly punk radio show on which I impose my musical taste on my loyal listenership for four hours. I keep them on their toes with occasional songs by AC/DC, Aerosmith, Blue Öyster Cult, Kiss, Nazareth, Chicago, Elton John and BJ Thomas. *(I've played every one of those artists on the show. No foolin'.)*

***SUBURBAN VOICE* (1982 to present).** Editor/Publisher. Long-running punk rock fanzine that hasn't published a print issue since 2003. People still ask when the next one is coming out. Any year now, people. In the meantime, read my blog.

IN YOUR EAR RECORDS (1995–1997). Clerk/Buyer. Ordered records, rang up sales, spent almost whole paycheck on records, drove the owner up a wall by playing loud, obnoxious punk and hardcore and even Molly Hatchet. He congratulated me for that one, and said it was the first time in the store's entire existence that anyone had played them. At least I didn't get fired, unlike a DJ on the Boston College radio station who got canned for playing America's "A Horse With No Name." Now that I think about it, he probably wasn't congratulating me. I think it was more along the lines of "What... the...*fuck*?!"

SOUNDWAVES (1994–1995). Owner/Manager. My ill-advised attempt at opening my

own record store with the financial backing of a big rock star who made a lot of money (thank you, ZERO BOYS). Spent most days staring at the walls, waiting for customers and playing loud, obnoxious punk and hardcore that didn't drive anyone up a wall, since I was by myself most of the time. The partnership was acrimoniously dissolved after a year because I was spending most days staring at the walls, waiting for customers, and not making a lot of money.

ROCKIT RECORDS (1985–1993). Manager. Purchasing, receiving and sales. Drove the owner and probably my co-workers up a wall by playing loud, obnoxious punk and hardcore *(detect a trend here?)*. Incredibly, he put up with this for eight years, even though I didn't have any compromising photos or other material with which to blackmail him.

CENTURY NORTH SHORE BANK (1983–1985). Teller/Loan Clerk. Started as a teller, promoted (?) to loan clerk. The latter involved working in a windowless basement office with co-workers whose chain smoking rivaled the cast of "Mad Men." Spent downtime snagging uncanceled stamps and copying flyers for pen pals all around the world. Demoted back to teller after messing up the credit card charge slips so badly took months to fix. While a teller, the manager drove ME up a wall by playing a radio station with obnoxious soft rock. To this day, "Close To You" by the Carpenters damn near induces projectile vomiting.

ZAYRE (June to October 1982). Management trainee. After three months of supervised training in store operations, I was transferred to another store and placed in charge of the toy and automotive departments. This meant many hours cleaning up after kids who threw toys all over the floor and hauling huge cases of motor oil. Probably drove customers up a wall by playing loud, obnoxious punk and hardcore tapes in the car stereo display in the auto department. To this day, the odor of Strawberry Shortcake merchandise damn near induces projectile vomiting.

RICHDALE STORES (Summer 1980 and 1981). Clerk. Convenience store job where I rang up sales, drank way too many Slush Puppies, flirted with the cute girl who lived across the street and played loud, obnoxious punk and hardcore tapes. Almost cost me my job when the wife of one of the company's executives came into the store while one of these tapes was playing.

INDEPENDENT DELIVERY SERVICE (1977–1979). Newspaper carrier. Delivered newspapers while avoiding mean dogs, getting sunburned, slipping on icy sidewalks, or getting drenched by rain. Developed a rather colorful vocabulary courtesy of my co-workers on the delivery crew. The job could be a "real pain in the pud," to quote one of them. Nearly driven up a wall by the loud, obnoxious disco music favored by the driver/supervisor.

STAR MARKET (1976–1977). Bagger. Duties involved placing groceries into snobby suburbanites' bags and chasing after carriages in all sorts of crappy weather. And making sure that those carriages didn't catch customers in the *tuchus* while pushing a long line of them in the door. I wasn't always successful at that.

CAMP LION (1974–1975). Counselor. Took care of staff members' kids. Kept them away from the all-female campers, played wiffle ball in the parking lot, and taught them lyrics to loud, obnoxious Ted Nugent songs.

Oh, I forgot one: ***MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL* (1984–present).** Contributor and columnist. Originally contributed interviews, features and monthly scene reports. Made a few appearances on MRR Radio on which Tim Yohannan made fun of my Massachusetts accent. Columnist since 2005. I fill 2000 words worth of space with music reviews, shameless self-promotion of my projects and meaningless, self-indulgent drivel. Like in this one.

SPEAKING OF THOSE MUSIC REVIEWS...

I always loved Jack Benny, the deadpan violinist comedian. One of the running jokes (besides the fact he was very tight with his money) was he couldn't play the violin to save his life, much to the consternation of his violin teacher, played by the man of a thousand voices, Mel Blanc. Well, there's a band called the JACK BENNIES and their debut album is called *Chopping Down The Weeds*. But there aren't any violins to be found, only guitars. Loud screaming guitars. Three loud screaming guitars, in fact.* This is hard-driving straight, no-chaser rock'n'roll akin to what a band like the FLUID did over two decades ago, fused the rawk with a dash of Stones-ish arrogance, but, in this band's case, without any hint of grunge. And the Apple Records parody on the record's labels makes sense when you realize that one of the songs is an electrified take on the BEATLES' "Polythene Pam." Shake it, motherfucker. (*admission: that's a riff on a Lester Bangs review for another band). (Human Head, 168 Johnson Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11206, humanheadnyc.com)

Pittsburgh three piece T-TOPS provide crushing, iron-wrought '90s style noise. Heavy as fuck from the outset, starting with "A Certain Cordial Exhilaration," which isn't all that cordial but is certainly exhilarating. Lurching, savage riffs punctuated with bashing drums, thick bass and assertive but not harsh vocals. They would have fit perfectly on a bill with HAMMERHEAD, HELMET, JANITOR JOE, et al, but don't sound like a relic. Gets the floor shaking. (Big Neck, bigneckrecords.com)

ADULT CRASH should just make out a royalty check to SS DECONTROL, because their five song, one-sided 12", *Unfinished Business*, comes straight from the *Get It Away* songbook. Riffs piled on top of each other, climbing up the ladder, and then careening down the sonic slide. Think of 'em as a West Coast counterpart to BOSTON STRANGLER and you wouldn't be far off the mark. They do a pretty convincing job, too. Packing power. (Standards, 216 E. Broadway, Vista, CA 92084, adultcrashvhc@gmail.com)

FRAU bash and flail their way through four songs on their second EP *Mira*. Abrasive, harsh punk with agitated-sounding vocals and primitive instrumentation. The barbed-wire guitar lines are underpinned by basic bass and drum patterns. FRAU come from the same inspiration as their London sisters GOOD THROB, but without as much post-punk angularity. Despite singing *"Communication is hard for me"* on "EBD (Emotional Behavioral Difficulty)," FRAU communicate their ire in no uncertain terms. (self-released, fraupunk@gmail.com)

Mark from Beach Impediment Records keeps the new vinyl coming, with three recent releases. CONCEALED BLADE are from Braddock, PA, just outside of Pittsburgh. Their 7" is a vinyl pressing of a demo from earlier this year and it's a rager. Throat-ripping vocals and a bare-knuckled hardcore attack. Thrash and floor-pounding crunch pulled from a late 80s NYHC inspiration, along the same lines as Mark's current band MERCY KILLINGS, and it's pretty fucking tough sounding. The transition from the speed of "Terminal Vice" into the thumping "Hell To Pay" is perfectly executed. The lyrics are appropriately pissed-as-fuck. *"I fucking wish you would give me the chance to end your worthless life right where you stand."* Yeah, I like these guys.

I like AJAX too. Their new self-titled 7" (their third release) provides a lesson in violent fury. Another harsh vocalist and a sound rooted in mid-period POISON IDEA (the vocalist even sounds a little like Jerry) and Swedish hardcore. Burning and driving, the blistering tempo occasionally giving way to a medium-paced stomp. "Paper and Steel" follows that pattern, fading off into a sheet of noise and cutting off abruptly, an appropriately jarring conclusion.

When I reviewed EEL'S *Endless Fucker* 12" in my year-end recap of 2014, someone poked fun at my observation that what they were doing was a "new wrinkle on raw punk." Nonsense, this person said, that it wasn't a new wrinkle but rather a tribute to bands like CONFUSE. Well, it *does* say "We believe in CONFUSE" on the back of EEL's new "Anti-Nuke" EP, and I suppose it does give a new perspective. However original or unoriginal it is, EEL do still bring the noise (sorry, PUBLIC ENEMY) with four more songs of high-energy, buzz-drenched punk. "Fuck Off The Human Insect" adds in a few metal licks. While that song has a clean sound, sonically "Hell" and "Noise For Neighbor" have a dirtier sound than on the 12". They also do a pretty straightforward read of DISORDER's "Tomorrow's World"—another influence, of course. I'm done splitting hairs. Just listen to the fucking record. (Beach Impediment, beachimpedimentrecords.blogspot.com)

HOLDER'S SCAR are from Greensboro, NC and rip out some good, solid fast hardcore on their *Sin Without Doubt* 7" EP. Will from To Live A Lie Records included a note with the record and said they have a ton of heart. I'd say that's true. Quite a few of the bands on his label tend to operate in more of a powerviolence/grindcore vein, but that's not the case with these guys. Mixing in some heavier parts without devolving into chug territory.

Will also included issue #4 of his *Fastcore Photos*, a half-sized, 52-page effort. Some of the black and white photos aren't that well-reproduced, and I might have been interested in reading some of his thoughts on the bands or shows, but it's a good mix of known and lesser-known bands covering the hardcore spectrum: FORWARD, COKE BUST, NASA SPACE UNIVERSE, CRESS and Boston's own CHAIN RANK are just some of the bands pictured. (To Live A Lie, tolivealie.com)

The late, great PUNCH IN THE FACE once had a song called "Not Here To Make Friends." That's been Bill from OPPOSITION RISING's credo going back to his days in TOXIC NARCOTIC. The *Riot Starter* EP is the latest salvo from this Boston mean machine. Bile-filled hardcore punk with vocals that get angrier with each subsequent release. They've dropped the reggae skank that was mixed into previous releases and just gone for the throat here. One of the songs is "Elitist Punks Fuck Off," and I want to give them a round of applause for that one, as I too am sick and tired of the cliques and elitism that exist in the punk scene here and just about everywhere else. Mellowing with age? No fucking way. (Pine Hill, pinehillrecords.blogspot.com)

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Even if "Underappreciated Classics of 1980s Midwestern Post-Punk" isn't an intentional regular theme of this column, it may as well be, and I'm turning the discussion toward two such neglected rippers in particular this month. OIL TASTERS were three Wisconsin weirdos (including bassist/vocalist Richard LaValliere and drummer Guy Hoffman, both previously of Milwaukee's KBD/power-pop heavy-hitters the HASKELS, who adopted a bass/drums/saxophone formula that, at least on the surface, didn't wildly veer off course from the angular mutant-funk of late '70s/early '80s New York No Wave (with JAMES CHANCE AND THE CONTORTIONS being perhaps the most obvious parallel).

Look past some of the more superficial similarities, though, and it becomes clear that their musical aesthetic was less aggressively confrontational than that of Chance and company, and was rather more shaped by the deeply Midwestern, tightly-wound neurotic post-punk bent that had marked fellow freaks like DEVO or DOW JONES AND THE INDUSTRIALS. On the band's self-titled 1982 LP, Caleb Alexander's slithering sax lines are paired with LaValliere's snotty and surrealist vocal delivery, to create a sinister art-damaged punk/experimental jazz meld. But the really dizzying highs come when OIL TASTERS take the frantic, oddball post-punk intensity of early PERE UBU and completely strip it of that band's more serious/humorless tendencies. Hearts of darkness and final solutions are replaced by whiplash anthems about a desire not to be an encyclopedia salesman and by television sets possessed by specters of significant others: "(I Don't Want to Be An) Encyclopedia Salesman" and "My Girlfriend's Ghost."

Fun fact: Guy Hoffman wound up playing drums for fellow Milwaukeeans the VIOLENT FEMMES during the mid '90s. Unfortunately for him, that was the same point in time when they finally crossed the line into complete irrelevance. If you haven't seen their truly unsettling, surreal appearance on the *Sabrina the Teenage Witch* TV show, go look it up on YouTube. The OIL TASTERS LP, though? Still un-fuck-with-able.

Underappreciated Classics of 1980s Midwestern Post-Punk, part two: Chicagoans by way of Lawrence, Kansas, GET SMART! reflected the relative isolation and desolation of the American plains in the harrowing and bleak angularity of *Action Reaction*, their debut LP from 1984 (a thematically appropriate release year). Geographically and musically, the band occupied a literal middle ground between the early '80s West Coast/East Coast punk and post-punk divide. "Black Mirror" has ominous echoes of the most frantic, paranoid WIPERS moments (minus the flashy guitar work and plus some female backing vocals), while the dissonant "Berlin on the Plains" suggests MISSION OF BURMA's "Secrets" dismantled and rebuilt from the ground up. Bassist Lisa Wertman's vocals and the stark, jagged slashes of guitar on "Knight" underscore a totally PYLON-esque hypnotic rhythm. When she and guitarist and lead vocalist Marc Koch converge into a disaffected duet in the martial post-punk pulse of "Just For the Moment," it's not too difficult to imagine them as a Factory Records-backed John Doe and Exene Cervenka. GET SMART! hit all of the same nerves as their contemporaries since aggregated as textbook 1980s American underground rock (with a lot of credit and/or blame going to *Our Band Could Be Your Life*), but *Action Reaction* is still one of those seemingly nondescript records that you've probably flipped past in the bins a dozen times without a second thought. Bona fide overlooked post-punk gem.

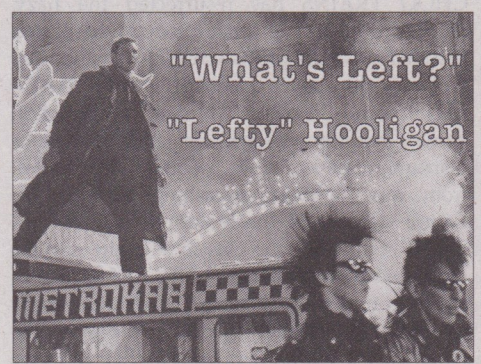
I had the good fortune to put on a Portland show last autumn for WIREHEADS, who traveled from Adelaide to record at Dub Narcotic Studios in Olympia, Washington and who decided to fit in some quick stops on this side of the Pacific Ocean. Their new LP *Big Issues* is the result of the recording sessions on that trip, a sprawling, scratchy, stream-of-consciousness post-punk racket that made me feel like I was in the presence of a 21st century Australian reincarnation of the FALL. It's not really a stretch to say that WIREHEADS have Mark E. Smith beat at his own game these days. They also got a tiny all-ages cafe space packed full of people on a cold November night to discard that most crucial of punk rules and to demand an encore (even more impressive, given that they were the second band out of three on the bill). There are faint glimmers of the SCIENTISTS' uniquely Southern Hemispheric take on howling, swampy garage rock at play here, coupled with some piercing, John Cale-meets-The BIRTHDAY PARTY violin drone and frontman Dom Trimboli's eminently FALL-like cryptic talk-singing. There's a punk barnstormer called "Year of the Horse" that has all the white-knuckled rage of the prime SST Records back catalog, which seamlessly segues into the soft-spoken strum of "Victorious Hermit," which puts WIREHEADS right in line with the bumper crop of modern Australian jangly pop bands (BITCH PREFECT, DICK DIVER, et al). There're borderline non-sequitur lyrics that touch on interior decorating and bridges in Oklahoma and people getting hit by buses. Do you need this LP in your life? Yeah, probably. (Tenth Court, tenthcourt.bandcamp.com)

While their band name unfortunately invites lowered expectations of sickeningly saccharine twee-pop, *Foggymotion*, the new cassette from Islington, UK trio the CHOO CHOO TRAINS has resurrected the hazy, narcotic lo-fi fuzz of Detroit's dearly departed VELVET UNDERGROUND-worshipping, molasses-slow psych queens SLUMBER PARTY. Their echo-drenched budget production values, haunting harmonies, and bare-bones instrumentation draw equal inspiration from raw, tambourine-bashing *Girls in the Garage* stomp and the heartbreaking, Wall of Sound stylings of the classic '60s girl groups, presented with awareness of the half decade of underground musical history that followed as a result. I'm especially partial to the moments when the tell-tale loose threads of their DIY pop leanings are fully exposed, like the shuffling drums and naked guitar strumming on "Margo T and Me" with the delicate pop primitivism of BEAT HAPPENING with Heather Lewis at the microphone, or the ethereal girlish vocals and persistent jangle on "The One I Love" and "Things You Do," in which the CHOO CHOO TRAINS transform the wild and giddy C86 rush of the ROSEHIPS, FAT TULIPS or the SHOP ASSISTANTS into something more sleepy and subdued. (Meat 'n' Tatty Tapes; thechoochootrains1.bandcamp.com)

London's SHOPPING have a pedigree that reads like a crash course in modern UK post-punk. Between the three of them, they've played with TRASH KIT, SACRED PAWS, WETDOG and COVERGIRL (that's just the short list). Their latest LP *Why Choose* draws from similar inspiration as their many side projects, the minimal, edgy tension and angular precision of the late '70s/early '80s English post-punk canon. Anyone familiar with her other bands is likely well aware that Rachel Aggs is a total genius at crafting stripped-down and stuttering ping pong guitar lines that seem to exist in a world in which the entire recorded history of the instrument begins with the FIRE ENGINES's "Get Up and Use Me" circa 1980. Those jagged stabs of guitar are the center point from which the rest of the band's off-kilter jump cut rhythms tumble out. The dryly delivered, overlapping, and slightly asynchronous female/male vocals on "Wind Up" have historical antecedents in the likes of DELTA 5 and GANG OF FOUR. Think "Anthrax" at 45 rather than 33, with consumerist ennui standing in for romantic disaffection.

It's always great to hear contemporary bands who have assumed not just the stylistic mantle of post-punk from the Thatcher era, but also the lyrical emphasis on the pointedly political (and personal-as-political). This critical advantage sets Shopping apart from so many of their peers, who are content simply to throw back to the danceable slash-and-burn musical trappings of their heroes, without paying much mind to the purpose of their ideological provocations. *Why Choose* is straight-up '79 in '15 and I'm totally okay with it. (FatCat; soundcloud.com/shoppingband)

Send me letters and music! Analog: Erika Elizabeth / 2545 E. Burnside Street #203 / Portland, OR 97214 / USA; digital: ripitupstartagain@gmail.com; radio shows for your listening enjoyment: expresswaytoyrskull.com.



Mistah Kurtz—he dead…
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, 1902

We need only glance at the awesome population figures predicted for the year 2000, i.e., twenty-eight years from now: seven billion people, only nine hundred million of whom will be white.
Jean Raspail, author of *The Camp of Saints*, 1972

I'll put it bluntly: Nothing you love will survive without white people.
Jared Taylor, "An Open Letter to Cuckservatives," *American Renaissance*, July 2015

Let's take two people: Bill Maher and Gavin McInnes. Both are writers, actors, political commentators, media personalities, and comedians of a sort. That's what they do for a living however, and there the similarities end. These two individuals couldn't be more different when it comes to what they believe.

Bill Maher calls himself a liberal, albeit one with a libertarian streak, an advocate of decriminalizing if not legalizing most "soft" drugs and prostitution, a pro-choice, pro-feminist, gay-friendly atheist who is anti-racist and against US military interventionism abroad. Gavin McInnes considers himself a conservative with libertarian tendencies, an opponent of legalizing "adult vices" like drugs and prostitution, a pro-life, anti-feminist Catholic with assorted issues about the usual suspects—gays, trans-folk, blacks, illegal immigrants—who likes his wars necessary and just. Funny thing is, despite these obvious political disagreements, Maher and McInnes both agree on a political tenant so fundamental as to constitute a common worldview, the need to defend Western civilization.

Catch Maher's tirades on *Real Time with Bill Maher*, or McInnes's rants on *Red Eye* and *TheRebelMedia*, and they sound remarkably alike. Muslims suck. Liberals are brain-dead or self-hating idiots and need to wake up. The West is ashamed or oblivious and needs to cultivate some brass. We're at war. We need to defend Western civilization, the West, our way of life from those goddamned Mooslims!

This umbrella sentiment—defend Western civilization—held by mainstream left-right-and-center, as well as certain elements on the fringes, relies upon volatile, highly emotional symbols. The Muslim hordes are once again at the gates of Vienna and Poitiers, symbolically speaking. And, there is a search for the next 9/11 to wake us all up. 11/M—the Madrid train bombings of 3/11/05—was the next 9/11, and 7/7—the London bombings of 7/7/05—was the next 9/11. Now, the Paris shootings of 1/8/15 have been equated with 9/11, and the hope was that the events in Paris would act as a rallying point around which the West could marshal its resolve.

A reporter once asked Gandhi: "What do you think about Western civilization?" Gandhi replied: "I think it would be a good idea." So while I broach the subject in this column, I can only scratch its surface. Consider for instance just the distinctions between Maher and McInnes among the myriad "defenders of the West." For McInnes, Islamic culture is backward, violent, inbred, not civilized, requiring a culture war or a religious war to protect "our entire civilization." For Maher, all religion is a bad idea, but Islam is the mother load of bad ideas, necessitating a war against them by those holding liberal Western values and ideas to preserve "our way of life." But what the hell is "Western civilization" anyway?

If we use strict political categories and define Western civilization as that aggregate of liberal democratic nation-states that purport to be based on and supportive of Western (e.g. Enlightenment) values, this is entirely ephemeral. Liberal democracies often become authoritarian or totalitarian regimes with alarming consequences (Italy in the 1920s, Germany in the 1930s, Czechoslovakia in the 1940s), and those nations touted as "the Switzerland of X" (Uruguay in South America, Uganda or Rwanda in Africa, Singapore in Asia) are anything but upon closer examination. Maher and McInnes are proud citizens of liberal Western-style democracies even as they consider liberal democracy the Achilles heel of those countries. And despite their professed libertarianism, when push comes to shove, Maher and McInnes often advocate very illiberal, undemocratic means such as racial profiling to combat the perceived threat of Islamic extremism.

If we defer to what we learned in our primary and secondary education, Western civilization is based on some combination of our Greco-Roman, Judeo-Christian traditions. Right off the bat, atheists like Maher would take issue with any form of religion counting positively toward the heritage of the West. For the classic liberalism that Maher claims, the Enlightenment legacy of reason, science, and skepticism constitute the best of what the West has to offer. For his part, McInnes accepts the whole vague social/cultural package defined as Western civilization, having converted from atheism to Catholicism and from anarchism to conservatism. Certain white power types would take offense at inclusion of the Jews in any affirmative evaluation of the West, since the Jews and Judaism are evil incarnate. This leads the ultra-right to efforts to redefine Christianity without its Judaic core, as in Christian Identity, or to abandon Christianity altogether for some amalgam of European paganism or out-and-out atheism. As for the Greco-Roman part of the equation, and again aside from the Enlightenment emphasis on these roots as the classical West's cultural and philosophical beginnings, there are many contenders for more-European-than-thou sources, beginning with the Celts and Germanic peoples, the latter a part of some mythic Aryan race, to pan-Slavism and Eurasianism, which seeks to shift the focus of European civilization from west to east, and to a Greater Russian geopolitical dominance that rejects Western European values.

So, what values are real, true Western values? Is Western civilization at its core pagan Celto-Germanic tribalism, or Talmudic Judaism, or Greek city-states, or Roman imperialism, or crusading Medieval Christianity, or Enlightenment modernism, or Slavic orthodoxies, or Russian Mongol corporatism? Aside from broad and banal generalizations, can anything uniquely Western be discerned in the music, literature, dance, painting, and architecture subsumed under the label Western culture? Can Western and Eastern be convincingly separated? Are the rule of law, secularism, science, and technology what distinguishes Western civilization?

Can any combination of the above stand for the whole, or must we be satisfied with an undifferentiated, cumulative understanding of Western civilization? Or is Western civilization like pornography, something that cannot be clearly defined, but we know it when we see it?

If the political is ephemeral and the social/cultural vague, the biological seems to offer certainty. Western civilization is the product of white people, and white people are the source of all that is good in the world. Hence the current popularity of DNA ancestry analysis that attempts to associate certain DNA markers with geographic locations as when, for instance, the distribution of the maternal haplogroup H is correlated overwhelmingly with the European subcontinent. From there its a small step to equate such analyses with a genetic causation for ersatz races and their behaviors, bringing us back to the "scientific" racism and eugenics of two centuries prior. Maher clearly detests and denounces such racialized definitions of Western civilization and resists taking this step. But McInnes shamelessly flirts with them. Sub-Saharan Africa had no written languages before white people arrived. Our advanced technologies were all invented by white people, and our material superiority is all due to the hard work of white people. "I love being white and I think it's something to be very proud of. [...] I don't want our culture diluted. We need to close the borders now and let everyone assimilate to a Western, white, English-speaking way of life." (*NYT*, 9/28/03) McInnes even denies that black people had much to do with creating rock and roll, he's so dead set on affirming that "white is right."

When he's not playing the contrarian, McInnes is responding in part to increased anger and frustration on the ultra-right as white racists feel increasingly besieged. The issue here is power. When white people held uncontested social power, white racists gloried in being white supremacists, fully backing the superiority and domination of white people over all others. When that power was challenged in the slightest degree and Enlightenment values such as equality threatened to emerge, white racists became the voice of the "embattled white minority" and fancied themselves white nationalists seeking to secede as a separate white nation. Countering the biological explanation for Western civilization does not merely require invoking the statistical truism that correlation is not causation, that the correlation of genetic factors with geographic location is not the cause of a so-called race's achievements and failures.

It also requires countering a logical fallacy that confuses the repeatability and predictability of hard science with the lack of either in history. That the past 10,000 years of human history and 2 million years of human evolution have led us to a world where capitalism, the nation state, white supremacy and patriarchy reign supreme tells us only so much. We cannot repeat history over and over, like a scientific experiment, to see whether or not we get the same results. Science depends on predicting future experimental results from successful past experimental results. But despite some historians seeing patterns in history, any ability to predict the future based on a study of the past has remained elusive. A particularly virulent configuration of wealth and power won the game we call history this time around, but since we can't ever play the game again there's no way to know whether that win was a fluke due to luck or a certainty due to merit.

Marx committed this fallacy himself in seeking to formulate a scientific socialism based on historical materialism. But there you go, another dead white European male whose ideas and the movements he inspired are very much a part of Western civilization. Again, whatever the fuck that means. Maybe the only way to make sense of Western civilization nowadays is how Joseph Conrad did it by counterposing Europe to The Other, in his case Africa, as a "foil to Europe, a place of negations at once remote and vaguely familiar in comparison with which Europe's own state of spiritual grace will be manifest" as Chinua Achebe once commented.

Maher, McInnes and other defenders of the West against radical Islam consistently contend that what Islam needs today is its own Reformation or Enlightenment. Seriously? Consider that from 1517 (the start of the Protestant Reformation) to roughly 1650 (an arbitrary start for the Enlightenment) between 10 and 30 million people perished across Europe in various conflicts related to the clash between Protestantism and Catholicism. In less than 150 years, on a subcontinent of roughly 4 million square miles and 70-80 million people, something like 20 million people died in Reformation, Counterreformation, the Thirty Years War, indeed scores of major wars and upheavals. This doesn't include the "New World" that Europe was exploring, conquering and colonizing at the time. The period in Europe from the Reformation to the Enlightenment was truly a slaughterhouse, yet a comparable social transformation is being urged onto the Islamic world as a great idea. Or maybe, perversely, its already happening. Perhaps Islam is undergoing its equivalent of the Reformation and Enlightenment right now. But to soberly compare 16th/17th century Christian fratricide to the modern Middle East—to the sectarian, ethnic, national and class conflicts engulfing vast swaths of a region with some 7 million square miles and half a billion people for the past 2 to 3 decades—we need to realize that we're are all in for some nasty shit. The exponential expansion in firepower from Medieval Europe to the Middle East today alone should give us pause.

Our brave defenders of Western civilization have a hard time seeing what's under their noses, much less the future. Any thoughtful discussion of the Middle East today will take up way too much space, and I have none left.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... My first novel *End Time* (AK Press, POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682), or *Fim* in Portuguese (Conrad Editora, R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil), is out of print. My second novel is in the works. I'm archiving past columns, and publishing current ones on my political blog, www.leftyhooligan.wordpress.com. My personal blog is www.gamatiasz.wordpress.com. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@icloud.com.

Golgo: *Strange that you had such ministry. Fish is not part of the traditional Cuban diet, even if it is an island. Fish is considered cat food in Cuba, isn't it?*

Guevara: *But there is improvement. In the past, eating fish was indeed considered a thing only for the poor. Now we promote fish consumption through fairs and public feasts. Even Fidel once did an advertisement on TV about it. In the spot, there was an empty table in an empty room. Fidel then entered and sat himself behind the table, looked into the camera, but didn't say a word. After a while a waiter entered and served him a plate of fish. Fidel ate the fish in silence. When only the fish-bones where left on his plate, Fidel rose up, looked imperatively into the camera, and spoke to his people the historical words "And now,you." And now we all eat fish."*

— 2008 Czech interview with Che Guevara's son, Camillo, about his position as Minister of Fishing.

The greed-mad Yankee, his pale, almost translucent skin covered with red, lanced boils and a viscous layer of sweat and expensive oils made from the tears of the exploited children of the Third World, stepped off the plane onto Cuba's heroic tarmac. Dressed like the murderous colonizers he is directly descended from, with his khaki shorts, his scuffed white shoes, and his dribble-flecked undershirt, he is missing only the pith helmet that would mark him as a true son of his forefathers. It would almost go without saying that he barely speaks a word of the common language used on this island he is visiting with his barely-concealed malignant intentions; in fact, he is not fluent in any language save the language of the colonial rat, the harsh and nonsensical English.

What is that look upon our hateful visitor's gaze? You might recognize it, dear reader, as a perverted mockery of that so human, so naïve, so Cuban of emotions: confusion. His face twists in approximation of that proletarian

feeling, and he sniffs, as if hoping his nose will lead him to where he's supposed to go. He resembles pudding left in the sun too long, and that, he no doubt fears, is exactly what he'll become unless he makes it inside very soon.

Well, pals, I made it inside. Cuba *was* hot, very hot, much, much hotter than the hottest day back home in San Francisco. I felt like frozen yogurt left to melt on the lip of hell, but aside from a terrifying series of sunburns that marred and disfigured my already revolting figure, the heat was the only thing that I found to complain about (tough for a Jew) whilst cruising around Cuba. And that wasn't even a complaint; what sort of imbecile would find issue with hot weather when visiting a fucking tropical island?

The Cubans stamped my passport, something they were absolutely *not* supposed to do (the United States was to be aware only that I visited Mexico, my stopping off point before two weeks in Cuba), but neither I nor my girlfriend found the energy to care. We were in Cuba, for Christ's sake, ensconced amongst the enemies, surrounded by terroristic Latin-Soviet spies, our every word recorded and reported to emotionless bureaucrats in dark basement offices stuffed to the ceiling with ill-intent! The body aches with hyperbolic fear just thinking about it, does it not? But of course, this is 2015, the Berlin Wall has crumbled, and far more Cubans listen to Pitbull than read Marx.

Havana was to me how it has been to all other foreigners: beautiful, decaying, thrumming with excitement, the people containing more electricity than the occasionally blacked-out power lines. Americans, if they are granted an official visa and pay for an official tour (for that is the only legal way to visit Cuba from the USA), are ferried from the airport to one of the restored old pre-Revolution (hell, pre-Batista) hotels, and then carefully conveyed upon a sightseeing tour orchestrated and conducted by bored Government employees. I assume this is due to some arcane laws written into the embargo, for Cuba risks little by allowing the Yankees free passage throughout the country. We snuck in, though, and were thus able to stay in Havana Vieja, the old-town, in an obscenely beautiful section of Havana that stands distinct from the rest of Havana by being older, prettier, and even more run-down than the rest of it.

I won't descend into tired descriptions of the beauty of Havana. The city is much like you might expect, if you've read even a little about it: yhe cars, with the exception of a smattering of hot-rod Ladas and a very small pinch of Chinese-made compact cars, are all from 1959 or, as is generally the case, made in the decade leading up to it. The buildings for the most part are much older. The city is surreal, much more so than I could convey here. In fact, I sound like a naïve, infantile "traveler"-type just talking about it, so I won't spend too much time on the lay of the land.

We observed the Guevara death-cult, although we didn't make it to his mausoleum in Santa Clara. The likeness of Che abounds in Cuba; from the backs of tanker-trucks to posters and billboards, stencils and stickers. The propaganda tilted towards the border of absurdity, but I suppose all of it is no more absurd than those ugly Obama "HOPE" posters that infested the rat-mazes of America before the reality of drone-strikes and bank bailouts set in. Fidel, too, peers out from roadside murals, although his ubiquity has lessened over the years. Like all peoples, of all countries everywhere, the Cuban people did not truly give a shit about their leader. Most I met took ironic pleasure in mocking the self-serious, grimacing outlook of The Very Old Men in Loose-Fitting Fatigues.

But I suppose someone must like them; they're still in power, after all. Perhaps it's too hot to care? Cubans, for the most part, seemed to be concerned more with stocking their rather depleted larders and perhaps cadging a fistful of tourist pesos than really giving a shit what their government does. I suppose in that way, Cubans are much like their old enemies, the fat capitalists that plot and scheme up in the United States. The whole world over, innocents prefer to dance and eat, while the predatory misanthropes clutching the throne grow more craven and insane. No one I met in Cuba really seemed to have their heart in the Revolution; too many mistakes had been made, too much had been sacrificed for relatively little material gain. True (and importantly), the yoke of U.S. imperialism has been thrown off, but all the strong words and bluster aimed at America seemed to have the effect of making Cuba's citizens *more* interested in Yankee culture. Forbidden fruit and all that.

I find the Cuban governments attempts at internationalism, through OSPAAL (Organization of Solidarity for the Peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America), their intervention in the Angolan Civil War, even Guevara in Bolivia, to be laudable, but ever since International Communism (or, in Trotsky's I believe accurate assessment, USSR-Centric Deformed Workers State Imperialism) fell in the early '90s, and Cuba entered the so-called "Special Period" (after the Soviet subsidies suddenly ceased) that outward-looking hopefulness has seemingly devolved into a Cuban-flag draped nationalism, an unfortunate, deadly mistake for an ostensibly leftist movement. Nationalism breeds exceptionalism, breeds xenophobia, breeds paranoia; Communists *must* be strict internationalists. "Socialism in one Country" is old Joe Stalin's ugly backwash, and must be liquidated as aggressively as counterrevolutionaries.

But I can't claim to know what's next for Cuba once Raul and Fidel go the way of Lenin and Mao. One way or another, greasy American tourists will likely invade the country, Miami capital will sink its hateful Catholic teeth into the neck of the economy, cruise ship ports will spring up and Cubans will have to learn how to become waiters, porters, tip-seeking servants like the lower classes here in this country. Welcome to the ranks of the New Proletariat—maybe I'll scream that in Spanish across the fucking Gulf of Mexico, eh?

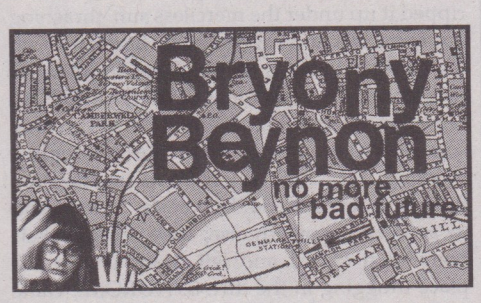
I sweat like a pig on a spit in the Yankee Imperialist Museum down at the sunny Bay of Pigs shoreline, where the CIA-backed counterrevolutionaries suffered their most humiliating public defeat. I dripped human slime from my hideous, gaping pores in Cienfuegos, where the woman we stayed with told us that Fidel used to hang out at the public park near her house, in the neighborhood full of Revolutionarily Expropriated Mansions by the Sea. I stank and dripped thick water from my skin all over the middle of the country and the North, tromping through fields of tobacco and stumbling down dirt roads trampled into muddy gullies by the constant traffic of horses and oxen. A marvelous country! Christ, how ugly places like the Midwest and New Jersey must seem to the Cuban expat. How dirty and cruel cities like St. Louis and L.A., for if they seem to that like me, they must appear as nightmares made real to one bred in the undeveloped beauty of the Cuban countryside.

To these American eyes, Cuba didn't seem like all that much of a police state. There's apparently little crime, which is perhaps a holdover from when the yoke was tighter, but even so we rarely saw police outside of the more populated urban centers. None of the Cubans I met seemed particularly fazed about talking with foreigners, although they sometimes hedged their words and gave a quiet look around when touching on more politically sensitive subjects. They all seemed appalled at the frequency of gun violence in America, many were scandalized at our admitting we had, on occasion in our youth smoked marijuana. Many had the same fears of Mexicans that our reactionary rightists at home possess and were stricken with worry when we told them we had to visit that country in transit to and from Cuba.

But here I am, trying to talk about Cuba like I know what the fuck I'm talking about when there's an interview *in this very issue* with actual Cubans. I'm just some Jew schmuck from San Francisco who went to a tropical island and digs old Vlad Lenin. This whole column really should have been about a single incident: Jen and I were walking down a crowded street in Old Havana, I mean a street positively bursting with people, when we hear "Jew! Jew!" Being the Worlds #1 Hooknosed Banker-Boy, I of course look around, feeling certain that it was I who was being spoken to. We found the source of the yells: two fat, older men, both in yarmulkes, sitting on a stoop. They greeted me in some Spanish-Hebrew hybrid, of which I did not understand a word, shook my hand a thousand times, and showed us the Kosher ration depot.

A brief, pathetic aside: I'm twenty-six yesterday, twenty-six and a day today. I've been writing for *Maximum Rocknroll* ever

since I was eighteen, save for the couple of years when my crippling addiction to illegal narcotics prohibited any creative output. My God—what a wasted life!



Dear Reader, it's time to offer you an apology for my relative absence from these pages. Maybe you've been feeling a little put out, a little disgruntled, or maybe you knocked over the candles at the foot of your BB shrine in a fit of teary betrayal, yelping as the hot wax hit your toes and congealed your foot hair into a lump. It's true, I'll own it. I ain't been around. Hush little baby don't you cry, cuz we opened a space. We opened a spayayaaaace. It's done as of about a month ago (who am I kidding, it's nowhere near done, but it has doors) and I don't want to shirk my responsibilities to you (I love being needed) any longer.

Punk and space are principle concerns of a long standing fashion, been thinking/writing on this for long enough to have bored everyone into submission, but now that it has actually happened here, against the kind of odds even a betting woman would run from, I feel like I maybe have some vague wisdom to put out into the world about where we are at and what we managed to do and how you can do that in your city, town, village, place of abode. Truth be told, I'm still so buried in the tiny practicalities of making everything work, that moving into the "it just works" phase is a slightly terrifying thing. I've barely stopped to step back and look at what's been achieved, what's possible when you say the word "help," and it's a warming notion, no shit. This is advice, I guess, for getting something done that feels important and impossible. This list probably works for things other than opening a do-it-yourself-arts-n-resource-center-space-place-building-thing, but that's where I'm starting.

So here are a meandering set of instructions from your fave daughterdidact, a sort of Oblique Strategies for the late naughties nobheads, the phreaq punk gendernation, if you will (you will, you really will) all brought to you with fierce care by your host Bryony.

OK.

Get Money. Not gonna shirk this one at all, you seriously need to get money. But consider punk. Money, small sums and large, is changing hands all the time. Ask how can it change in your hands. Ask people to put it in them and prove your reliability. Do this for a period of years if you need to. Live in the abstract. Talk about what you might want to do, what sort of place you want, and why you want it, not as though it is a fait accompli, but a burning possibility that others can shape. Keep it that way. Do not write your manifesto before you have had a single meeting with strangers. Landlords are landlords for a reason. They may even seem nice. You better watch it. An honest bastard one is better than a dishonest sweetheart. Do not start from the position of looking for a space before you have money because you will fail and cry and feel like you want to die. Start slow and small. Our landlord told us he was hoping to retire from the money made by the eventual flipping of the building we will occupy for the next five years to a luxury housing developer. If you enter the world of commercial renting (which you probably will have to do unless you are a millionaire, in which case, please don't read this, I hate you) you will don a hat, unwilling or otherwise, that has a cog on it, you become, in the eyes of others, whether it's the city or your landlord or certain other stakeholders, a cog in their machine. The time to challenge accepted narratives about young people renting buildings to do creative things is not in the meeting with the powers that be. Let them be. Suck up and frame yourself in the most odious way possible. Use the shitsystem to your advantage. Make it think it needs you. Wear that cog hat with fake pride. You should consider a few business drag ideas. Uniqlo do nice shirts.

Hide your tattoos. Do what you must do. Our space has always had additional political aims, but they cannot be achieved if we had not been ready to at least hold the poison in our mouth and pretend to swallow for the duration of whatever meetings you need to have. This is a pragmatism you will learn to sharpen. If you do not want to appear as (or indeed, *be*) gentrification vanguardists, then you must do the work on the ground. Consider honestly what could make people feel that way about you. If you find a space in a neighborhood that could work, do not even consider going for it until you have some local support. Find a community group who could use space and make yourself their partners. What are the struggles here and how, without anarchy signs and outlandish pronouncements, can they be advanced through the use of space? Similarly, go to those who have failed before you and ask them honestly what happened. What did they learn? Speak to those who ran other spaces and get their exit interview. Defensiveness is the path to failure, so if someone tells you something you feel like you should have known, or that you already did five hours of research on, just thank them. If someone acts like you are a fool for even trying this, maintain eye contact, smile and say, "Yeah, it's a big challenge, let's see how things go!" Remember their face for opening night. Don't you ever open a space that is not accessible to people who don't drive or can't walk.

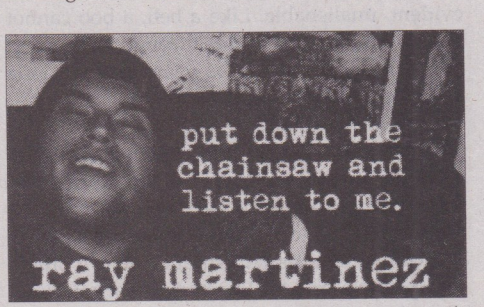
On strangers. Always smile. Be disastrously kind. Be so kind that others feel scared and afraid for the world outside the project. You can create a working culture that is so ruthlessly supportive that people will yearn for a day holding a ladder for someone else. You can learn things from other people just by watching. Push yourself. If you are socially anxious, create a crew around you that isn't. That can deal with all sorts of agendas and interactions. Embrace what makes you uncomfortable. Your comfort zone is bullshit anyway. Expanding foam canisters work best held upside down. Find both skillers and chillers. People are magical and can offset each other's whims on even the worst of days.

Become friends with the builders merchants, for they have all the things you need.

Consider walls. You will need to build them but it is not that difficult.

***

Yesterday I signed the lease, and the lawyer, a young woman who we'd been matched with through a pro-bono scheme, seemed eager to prove some sort of credentials, telling me nervously about her "music producer" friends and laughing awkwardly when I invited her, as I do everyone, to come and check out the space, as though I had just offered her a flight to Mars. I looked out of her 34th floor office window onto the decimated city below, luxury flats glinting in the weak acid sunshine, and I thanked her for her help and meant it. She said quietly in response, "It's nice to be on the side of the angels, for once."



I think it's time to bring back the noble art of booing.

We have gone too far down this road of participatory trophies, everyone being a winner, it's the thought that counts.

It doesn't count. Your thoughts are as worthless as your intents. What you do is the only thing that counts. And if what you do is bad, well, you should hear about it. With a nice, hearty, bottom of the chest, back of the throat,

"BOOOOOO!"

I've had enough of the half-turned heads in disbelief and disgust to someone courageous enough to boo in sincerity. Same with the ironic detachment of faux-boo. Or worst yet, no longer relevant or clever referentially post-modern "Bod-urns" of the *Simpsons* from 20 years ago. When did people become so fragile, so tender, that we feel scared to boo or be booed? Of course no one should enjoy being booed. That's the point of The Boo, to illicit discomfort and express that the thing that you are doing is not of a satisfactory level.

Nice try, didn't work, get your shit together, and try again.

Or not.

Maybe you *should* give up. Because frankly, you stink.

"BOOOOOO!"

Silence in the face of mediocrity is an acceptance of it. And I can no longer stand here and accept a mediocre performance from someone. Whether it be a band, a speech, a sports fixture, a dramatic re-enactment, or even a long-winded musing. If it's not up to par, it will be booed and I will bravely, nobly be the one to do it.

It's time to stand tall and boo in the face of anything less than acceptable.

Your feelings do not supersede mine.

Also, why do we think it's mean to boo? We're fine with online trolling, message board shit talking, throwing shade, diss songs, beef tracks, mean reviews. So why don't I hear that many boos?

A boo is honest. It's of the moment. It's specific, and to the point. Guttural. *It feels good.*

Try it.

Next time you see a cop, just give a hearty "BOOOOOO!"

Trust me, you'll feel like the million dollars you're never going to see.

Sometimes a boo is all we have, politically or socially. It can't be commodified, hyped, packaged, branded, pivoted, or stolen. It's self-evident, unalienable. Like a bell, a boo cannot be un-rung. Its echo carries through valleys and mountain peaks. It can be heard and felt long after the mouth is closed.

A boo leaves stains.

You'd think that in this Yelpified society in 2015 that you'd hear more booing more often. Social media has given everyone not only the platform to be a critic, but the incentive, drive, and culture of incessant critique. We're living in the Spectacle, and the Spectacle must be valued and criticized! Why are so many people voicing their opinions in silence, with only the sounds of thumbs hitting touchscreens and fingers clicking on keyboards to sound their dissent?

This current zeitgeist has also brought the politics of accountability further into the mainstream that they have ever been. That coupled with the modern ability of digital retrieval and dissemination has made everyone accountable for everything they have ever done. So why aren't you booing?!

The Boo is accountability politics at its finest. It's most honest and pure. The Boo is the platonic ideal of accountability. It simultaneously holds the recipient of The Boo accountable for an action, immediate or previous, and holds the giver of The Boo accountable for their criticism. It creates an immediate, spontaneous dialogue of accountability, while never placing the onus of defense on either person specifically, but all parties equally.

The Boo is *deep*.

Print fanzines, cassette tapes, vinyl records, flannels, goth, grunge, Oi!, PC fascism, riot grrrl, apolitical posturing, fedoras, pop culture as political discourse, political theatre as pop culture...all these things are making huge resurgences in popularity. Trends and ways of times past now gaining new traction and relevance as our internet/digital culture flattens time and weaves it into a circle.

So why not booing?

I say we make a concerted effort to bring back this long lost tradition and art.

Boo the band that can't set up their gear in a reasonable amount of time.

Boo the tall jerk who pushes their way through the crowd to stand in front of the shortest person in the crowd.

Boo the asshole who shows up to the show drunk, with beer, but somehow doesn't have enough money to give to the door.

Boo the person who tells a lady to "chill out" because she feels unsafe in a space.

Boo the policeman who abuses his authority.

Boo the policeman in your head.

Boo-ers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your voices!

Let us give a collective boo to the society that wants to see people of color and trans people dead, women in submission and subservience, the world commodified and colonized. To everything from the architects of the systems of oppression that try to grind us down and keep us at each other's throats instead of theirs to the bus driver that blows by your stop as you stand there waving and screaming.

Let's all take a deep breath.

Now everyone, together...

"BOOOOOO!"

All Punks Go For It! Man oh man, it's been a long fuckin' time since I've been crammed into a crowd of sweaty, charged-up, decked-out punx and boy did it feel good. It's a shame that Fresno is located on the surface of the sun (Jesus, I haven't been that hot in forever!), but its rad punx and cold beers more than made up for the environment. One hundred extra punk points to each and every one of the crazy fucks that sported leather jackets all day long. Mitchell (of MUTANT ITCH and Dark Raids Distro) did a bang-up job organizing a promoting the fest. The turnout was fantastic, the setting was perfectly gritty and when Fresno's Finest decided to shut the show down early, the organizers were able to herd a massive crowd of drunk punx a couple blocks down the street to the local infoshop where the rest of the show played out in fine style. Couldn't have turned out better.

All the bands were at least good, but several were downright amazing! CHAOS TRIBE ripped it up under the merciless sun, thrashing out some fast and ragged noisy hardcore with plenty of wild solos that had me sprinting to pick up their two demos. FUNDAMENTAL turned in a visceral set of angry noize-core that somehow just got better when the mic stopped working. MUTANT ITCH have transformed from a "good but could be better" local band to a fucking powerhouse; they leveled their hometown crowd and left every jaw in the place dragging in the dirt. SYNDROME came in from Boston on late notice and fucking wrecked the place with their powerful GLOOM-influenced crust (their drummer is a goddamn animal!). TOM AND BOOT BOYS... sigh. Just amazing. Because they ended up having to play in a super-packed space to an incredibly raucous crowd they cut their set short, but were still every bit as great as I had hoped they would be, plus we got naked Nori, which I think means seven years' good luck for everyone who was there (or maybe that means it's going to be a long winter, something like that).

TOM AND BOOT BOYS also prepared a handful of new split EPs for the occasion, including a split with MUTANT ITCH that evaporated before I could get my hands on one (as it turns out, a pressing plant error meant that there were only 30 copies available at the gig, but there will be a full pressing available soon). I did mange to grab a couple though. There's a split flexi with WHO KILLED SPIKY JACKET? who unfortunately weren't able to make the trip to the West Coast for the gigs themselves. The TOM AND BOOT BOYS material smokes, featuring an alternate version of "Go Go Tom and Boot Boys," a killer punky new track called "I Shall Fuck You All" and a punchy cover of the STAR CLUB's "Ha". WHO KILLED SPIKY JACKET? turn in two tracks that that I like a lot better than the stuff on their recent split with the ERECTIONS. "Barmy Army" is a hard-edged UK82 barnstormer and "Future//Violence" is a sing-song-y '77 punker that has more than a hint of TOM AND BOOT BOYS style in the catchy guitar lead. (Dark Raids Label, Human Double Face)

They also had copies of their limited gig-only split with the RAYDIOS. TOM AND BOOT BOYS shine with "Messed Up," an anti-showering anthem that will ring true for more than a few punx, and the double-time "ABCD Punk Rock." The RAYDIOS (ex-TEENGENERATE) lay down two tracks of catchy, garage-y power pop. The minor-key riff of "G.S.T" leads beautifully to the catchy chorus, while "I'll Feel Alright" has a killer DEAD BOYS vibe. I'm sure it's not news to the more garage-oriented readers of this mag, but goddamn this band is great. This is limited to 200, and well worth picking up before it vanishes forever. (Mangrove Label)

Meanwhile in Japan, ASPECTS OF WAR toured the country with SYSTEM FUCKER and CONTRAST ATTITUDE (ain't that a bill?) as the *Punk Carinval Tour*, complete with a brand new ASPECTS OF WAR/SYSTEM FUCKER split to bring along. SYSTEM FUCKER continue their surprising evolution from inept raw punk band to traditional Japanese hardcore fighters with the two tracks presented here. "Destroy the Pressure" is a dramatic banger, with lots of tempo changes and huge gang choruses. "Lady Play With My Mind" has a central riff straight out of the DEATH SIDE playbook, backed up by some seriously hard-hitting drumming. Both tracks are as good or better than anything on their recent LP, and to be honest, I lean towards better. Great stuff from a band that improves with every release. The ASPECTS OF WAR tracks don't have the throat-grabbing immediacy of their tracks from the CONTRAST ATTITUDE split, but they're definitely solid, thick warmly-recorded traditional D-beat that doesn't overdo it with the guitar noise and features some of the sickest bass tone in the Western Hemisphere. "Those Who Declare It" is definitely DISCHARGE all the way, while "Nuclear Deterrence" has more of a DISCLOSE/CONTRAST ATTITUDE vibe. Strong Mind Japan (who released this split) also put out a handy ASPECTS OF WAR discography CD (*Loud Raw Assault Vol. 1*) that compiles all three demos, both earlier vinyl efforts, the Konton Crasher comp tracks and a live set that's well worth picking up. Brain Solvent Propaganda pressed a flexi for the tour as well which includes a new track and a DISCLOSE cover.

FEROCIOUS X, a band that I still think of as kind of young and new (because I'm old as fuck), recently released a CD that documents their first fourteen (!!) years as a band, including their 2002 demo, which was later released as the *Vaga Tänka Själv* EP on Distort Records, the two tracks from the incredible *Konton Damaging Ear Massacre* compilation, the *Befria Fran Vanda* EP on Overthrow Records and the *Ferocious XxGuilty C.* EP (also on Overthrow) along with two unreleased tracks and a DVD of chaotic live footage. Expect nothing less than top shelf Swedish-influenced hardcore, with archetypical "Aaaaaaa" vocals and a sound driven by mangled guitars and bass lines that provide the melody. It would cost a fistful to pick up all the originals (though the amazing collaboration with GUILTY CONNECTOR is still a cheapie), so if you need a big fix of FEROCIOUS X this is your chance! (L.A.R.V.A.)

The NO FUTURES's (The ノーフューチャーズ) *Never Mind the Bollockass* CD can best be summarized with an anecdote. I was playing this CD when my wife sat down and said, "What is this, it sounds familiar?" To which I replied "Yeah, it sounds exactly like the SEX PISTOLS." And it does. The NO FUTURES live and die on Johnny Rotten-style enunciation and rolled letters, Steve Jones's guitar licks, a steady diet of mid '70s pub rock and just a pinch of NEW YORK DOLLS glam swagger. But shit, if you dig this style there's no band in the world that does it better. Tracks like "Wave Shock" or "Baby Baby Baby" (with its incredibly infectious backing vocals and chorus) could be slipped into any early UK punk compilation and nobody would be the wiser. Sure, yeah, it's monstrously derivative, but it's fun as fuck punk played by guys who live and breathe '77. (self-released)

Two fucking killer demos crossed my desk this month as well. S.A.G.A.L.'s *Suckup Alolics Gain Acrobatic Licks* demo, straight outta South Korea, may be the best goddamn TOTALITÄR worship I've ever heard. The opener ("Intolerance") definitely sets the pace for the rest of the tape, super fucking thick heavy Scandi-core with blazing leads (their guitar player is a fucking master of Swedish leads!), raw-throated vocals and straightforward d-beats played with enormous power. The tempos vary some but they mostly stick to a mid-paced crushing groove that works perfectly for them and top it all off with a cover of "Vansinnets Historia" that they completely make their own. A lot of demos, even good ones, are "play once and file" to me, but I have a feeling that I'll be reaching for this one for years and years to come. Absolutely incredible stuff. (Pissed Off)

Representing Portland, and to a lesser extent the Bay Area, FRANKY is members of LIFEFORM and PIG DNA (among others) playing perfect pogo noize punk that draws from the same well of influences as GAI (DISORDER and CHAOS UK, whose "I Hate Society" is covered here) without being overly derivative of the Kyushu scene. As is proper, the clever melodic bass lines carry the tunes here, and lots of phaser is in effect along with 1-2 drums (played by Felix...weird, I thought he'd been killed!), fuzz guitar and hoarse shouted vocals. More than a few people have declared the noizecore revival dead, and good riddance to it, but with bands like FUNDAMENTAL and FRANKY in the game, they style is as well represented as it's ever been here on the West Coast. (self-released, mrfrankysband@gmail.com)

Finally, on a sad note, I have to mark the passing of Jim Konya, a towering figure in the Cleveland punk and metal scenes who performed with 9 SHOCKS TERROR and powerviolence supergroup SCARVER'S CALLING (and of course NUNSLAUGHTER, SCHNAUZER, TONDRA and a host of others). He was a massive, physically imposing dude with the sweetest heart imaginable, a generous soul who embodied the DIY ethic and the "network of friends" spirit. Along with any number of musical performances, I will never forget him jumping over/through his drum kit during a SCHNAUZER set at Cleveland's infamous Speak in Tongues to fight Nazis who had invaded the show. He was a wonderful man who will always be fondly remembered by the thousands and thousands of people whose lives he touched through his music and his personal kindness. RIP Jim, you will be missed more than you could have ever imagined.

You can reach me c/o *MRR* or at agunderwood@gmail.com. Take care everybody.

"Brotherhood's outdated,
Bring it fucking down.
Brotherhood's corrupt,
Burn it to the ground."
— Firewalker, "Sicker Than You"

Fellow pieces of shit: welcome to part two of G.L.O.S.S. Tours America (and Canada!) As you may recall, our story last left us in a dank basement tucked amid the serpentine canals of Ottawa, Canada, with a D-beat/NWOBHM band of unrivaled ferocity, TRIAGE. TRIAGE is an absolutely devastating band...read last month's column to hear more about them and other ass-blastin' bands from the first half of tour! Yes. But now you will read this month's column. Yes.

OK. After our descent from Canada, we landed in Boston, which as some of you may know is my hometown. As the aphorism goes, you can take the girl out of Boston, but you can't take the sour fucking attitude, propensity for shit-talking, and predilection toward alcoholic depression out of the girl, right? Boston is a place that I have a lot of conflicted feelings about, mostly because the last seven years or so I spent there were, while obviously containing meaningful friendships and the occasional silver-lined victory, totally unbearable. But I couldn't have asked for a better homecoming.

The show we played at Hardcore Stadium with LEATHER DADDY, FIREWALKER, DAME, and GAS STATION GIRLS proved that the Boston punk scene today is ruled by women. Like, fucking *dominated* by women. Which didn't seem like the case for most of my life. Ye olde slam pit was filled with girls with bows in their hair wearing lipstick and chain-wrapped miniskirts. I saw at least one pink WARZONE shirt. *All of the girls in Boston mosh. Really well.* Honestly, I could have shed a fucking tear it was such a beautiful sight. A room full of ladies doing their thing, for each other, paying no mind to the boys scattered around. The vibe was like, "Boys AKA coat racks, LOL."

Every band was incredible but FIREWALKER blew my mind apart with their *Ball Of Destruction*-era MADBALL sound done femme. They really demonstrated their style, but like, revolution girl style...sorry. But yeah, they are a fearless band throwing riffs down like fucking challenges. The song "This City" even has some of that *Set It Off* bounce to it...know what I mean? The vocals in FIREWALKER are fucking terrifying, and when Sophie shouts, "Don't cross me" you're definitely like, *I should not cross this bitch. She is a human pitbull. Unpredictable. Hungry. All muscle.* This shit just makes you want to flip a table and smash a bottle over your own head. "Sicker Than You" is straight-up shit-talk on the boys' club: *"We're half the population and we're sicker than you / Sick of all this shit that you put us through / Twice as angry, twice as fed up too / mentally tough, twice as tight like glue."* Damn, that's tight; 2x tight. Pick up this tape if you can. I can't wait to see what comes next from this band!

LEATHER DADDY delivered as always, and after spending six weeks watching hardcore bands night after night, I can say with confidence that they are one of the best bands in punk today. I get emotional watching this band because to me they represent how far punk in Boston has come in the last few years. Girls are running the fucking show and playing in the best bands, and it feels like LEATHER DADDY was one of the first groups leading the charge. Unapologetic in their femininity, that's the phrase that comes to mind. Catchy breakdowns, strong bass playing, and perfect drumming are the stripped-down core of this band. They were doing the meathead 1-2 beat thing before it was popular. Lauren's got that high-pony splashing around so you know not to fuck with her or she'll pop bubblegum in your face and give you a couple jabs with her ST. RIPPER knife-comb... like, that's the general feeling anyway. Giving Willow Smith in the "Whip My Hair" video a run for her money. It is seriously impossible not to slam during this band. The guitar tone is perfect and the riffs keep calling your name until OMG, your body answers the call and you find yourself dragging your knuckles from one side of the room to the other. In the past couple years LEATHER DADDY has produced two essential tapes and one essential 7", and as far as I know this band doesn't show any signs of throwing in the towel. Can we please get you ladies out to the west coast soon?!

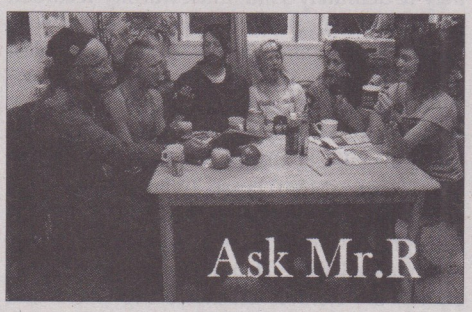
Whenever I've managed to stop listening to PARAMORE this week (not a joke), I've had the DAME demo on repeat in my room. They're a synth-coated punk band with a definite FUZZBOX aura, but rooted in guitar-driven rock, with teeth bared like HONEY BANE. Some people might call it dark wave but it's more punk than that connotes and the drumming is all human. Who cares what the fuck it is, it's so good! "Shy Bullet" is as catchy as any song by the aforementioned, held down by some looping floor tom work that really gets a hold of you. Pretty much every song is memorable, but "Charm School" is the earworm. Singer Diana Damewood steals the show on this cut with a perfect vocal delivery—self-assured, ripe with disdain and the feeling of having moved on from someone else's bullshit. At least that's what I project onto it. This band is really cool and I hope they make it to vinyl; they'd be doing us all a favor.

Other highlights of tour include playing a midnight show in Philly at an outdoor skatepark under a bridge to four hundred punks with CHONDRIA who are an excellent new band featuring members of other excellent bands. Witnessing the ignorant HC warhorse from D.C. that is ICE. Holy shit I love ICE, it's like TERROR or some shit but you don't have to look at a bunch of shitheads, you can just enjoy the bludgeoning without shame. *"Call me crazy/ I'm a loose screw/but I'm the coldest bitch/that you ever knew/ICE!"* FUCK yeah, I wanted to mosh so hard during this band but there was literally no room. Also they have a mosh call where the singer yells "Suck my dick" and honestly it is the best thing of all time, I fully support women yelling "suck my dick". We played at a pizza shop in Louisville, Kentucky, with a band called STREET RAT, who were very nice boys, and I saw someone get their throat spin-kicked into a soda machine during their set. Apparently the soda machine breaking from errant spin-kicks is common enough occurrence at Spinelli's Pizza to warrant the owner reminding folks to "not mosh the soda machine". The singer of STREET RAT crouched like a beautiful sea crab the entire time, holding the mic vertically and upside down. Before one of the breakdowns he yelled "Yo, where my dogs at?" and a swarm of large men with X-watches and "MONEY PUSSY WEED" shirts started doing what can only be described as Aggressive Gymnastics. It probably sounds horrible but honestly I had the right attitude at the time and it was one of the best moments of my life.

We did four days in the south with Florida's GOUGE AWAY and they are sweet earnest souls. (I miss you GOUGE AWAY!) Look out for the forthcoming GOUGE AWAY LP on Eight-Sixed Records for some early '00s emotional hardcore like VERSE or something but minus the octave chords and seemingly influenced more by the GATHER/SEVEN GENERATIONS split. PROGRAM from McAllen, Texas, are a fucking *sick* new D-beat band featuring members of PORKERIA. Please, please, please if you are in a band consider playing a show in McAllen. It's a tiny town at the southern most tip of Texas, basically in Mexico, and as it's pretty far out of the way bands never go there. But the show we played was off the hook and one of the best-feeling nights of tour. The kids are so hungry down there, the bands were diverse and excellent, and everyone was over-the-top with the hospitality. It was very humbling. The border towns need love and they need to not be forgotten by touring punk bands, this is the message I was asked to relay. Get to McAllen if you can!

Lastly, Oklahoma City has some of the raddest trans women punk bands right now like LEECH and TRASH LOBSTER. TRASH LOBSTER is incredible, my eyes watered during their set, their singer is a goddess and I want to fully support her. Trans femme fury. The drummer played on actual trash cans...what an extremely memorable band. FUMIGADOS from LA had me captivated their entire set. PROFILE and RHIZOME from the Bay are going to be unstoppable. Lucy from PROFILE has the sickest stage presence, this band is a fucking powerhouse. So much more. Agh. There are too many good bands, it's hard to keep up with them all! I could go on and on but this column is fucking late as heck and I need to tie a lil bow around it and scoot it on over to Grace's e-door. I hope this installment of Sadie's Gay Bullshit has given you an ample selection of bands to look up and kill your boss to. 'Til next time, xoxo

Write me: smashitdead@gmail.com



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though. (And if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague as: A column for people who are intrigued by subtle differences between the "punks" and the "punx.")*

Text a question to 510-585-HELP (510-585-4357)! Apparently you can also call that number and leave a message like a weirdo, or just send a regular-assed email to askmrr@mail.com. If you're sending a question that is time sensitive, let me know so that I can get you a timely response!

Living in the Bay Area, I always hear talk of how rich tech workers are pushing the punks (and everybody else) out of their living situations. In a lot of situations I've seen recently, though, the eviction of punk houses/warehouses/show spaces seem to have been caused by internal issues rather than someone else scheming to kick them out. Do you have any tips on things we can do to keep our shared living situations/ art spaces harmonious and more importantly OPEN? "Make sure everybody pays rent" ain't gonna cut it!

Come on! I know "make sure everybody pays rent" can't be the *entire* list, but it's gotta be on there! There are many important things to put on a list that are specific to keeping a show house around, but some of them have to be the basic good roommate stuff. Not like "do your dishes" or anything, I mean, because theoretically it

doesn't matter whether the dishes get done. The actual issue is whether some roommates want them done, whereas others do not feel like doing them, and that ensuing back and forth.

Personality issues are always a big part of the destruction of punk houses: power struggles, roommate resentments, angry neighbors, et al. If Sarah is a person at the house who books a show, and she disappears before the show is over, leaving housemate Becky in charge of kicking everyone out and making sure the band has gas money and a place to stay, Becky is going to be way less likely to encourage/allow more shows at the house in the future. It doesn't matter that Becky is super responsible or "the most sober roommate" or any other rationalization Sarah might have made to herself. In fact, Becky might even get sick of living with self-involved Sarah altogether and just move out.

Now Sarah has to find a new roommate if she doesn't want to lose her house, and if she is theoretically living in the Bay Area, she better find someone soon cause the chances of her finding a new place where she can live and have shows are very, very slim. Sometimes when trying to fill a room you'll end up with a person who isn't really into there being shows at the house. Yeah, I don't know why they moved in there either, but that kind of thing happens. A lot of people seem to be into the idea at first and then get burnt out after living in it for a while. Maybe they have to get up early now. But however it happens, you can make simple allowances for other people who are unwillingly thrust into your party zone. In order to continue having an active space, enact house and neighborhood respect moves like if your roommate needs a show to end at ten because they have to get up really early in the morning to go to work, or the food stamp office or whatever other thing they might have to get up early to do, or if *your neighbor* needs a show to end early because of *any reason, make sure the show ends on time*. No one generally shows up until nine you say? Get that reputation for being the one house that actually starts shows at seven! Have the flyer say it starts at five o'clock! Stealth punk time! Fool the purists!

Remember that it is especially important to maintain sustainability with the neighbors as punks doing house shows in poorer neighborhoods or ones that are home to marginalized people in general because, as Heather Blotto perfectly put it, "that is the social fabric we are a part of, and it affects everything from whether you are perceived as a nuisance by people who already have so much to deal with, to whether the cops get called on you, to whether bikes get stolen at the show." Very true. Trying to reduce the amount of stress put on your house and your neighborhood will really contribute to the longevity of your space.

Other tips for keeping things running smoothly from your experienced local show throwers include:

1. Don't book too many shows. Make sure that your show is actually something everyone cares about. Booking too many blah shows ends up just being a chore and burn out for all the people actually dealing with the noise, messes, hassle, etc. It's okay to say no to putting on a show.
2. Wake up early and clean the yard before the neighbors start waking up! Walk around the whole block and make sure all the garbage is gone. It really makes a big difference in all your future dealing with them.
3. Don't blow up the spot. Be realistic about how many people the place can handle and don't book a show that'll be way too huge for the space. Even if you think it'll make you cool to have some famous band play in your living room (it will), think about the effect it will have on your house/neighbors, and also the people showing up. Theoretically at least, everyone is trying to come and see the band, not just to get stuck in the front yard of the house where the band is playing cause there isn't any room left inside.
4. Getting people outside the household to help with setup, moving furniture, cleanup, etc. takes some pressure off everyone else.
5. Let your neighbors know that you are having a show, and tell them if they've got any questions or concerns to talk to you. And do it in person. Eventually you'll come to an agreement—or an impasse. Cross that bridge when you get there.
6. *Keep in communication with the community. Do people feel creeped out at your house? Do they think that the house rips people off? Do they think that the house is too uptight?* This last tip (from Ray Suburbia) seems especially important. Even if you manage to avoid any and all common causes of punk house death, like you live in a place with no neighbors or shitty landlords, and have no roommate issues to speak of, if you don't keep your house relevant by communicating with the actual people in your scene, you will end up in house show purgatory. Doomed to put on shitty shows that nobody even wants to attend. RIP'ing a place that could've been cool can be just as bad for a scene as RIP'ing a house that disappeared.

I'm sure I left out tons of stuff that contributes to the death and life of houses. If there's anything you want to add or an experience you want to shit talk about, send it in and I'll print it here. Other punk problems? Text 510-585-HELP or send in email form to askmrr@mail.com.

WHAT'S GOOD, *MRR*. Welcome to my tenth column. So much has been going on since the last time I wrote. Namely, I moved out of New York City for the first time in my whole entire life and now I live in Austin, TX. Weird, right? Everyone I know is excited for me, but also everyone is shocked that I would leave because I've always seemed like one of those people that would stay in New York forever—in part because of my personality, but also because I've always adamantly sworn that I would never leave.

Three other things I've adamantly sworn in my life: I would never like the Smiths, I would never be a vegetarian, the Dead Kennedys would be my favorite band forever.

Re: The Smiths. This is something I said when I only listened to Blanks 77 and the Casualties, the same era where I pejoratively referred to the Stooges as "too psychedelic." Like one year later I was dating this Darkwave College Babe who I met at the Starbucks I worked at in high school and we were driving to the beach and the song "Ask" came on on a mixtape in her car. Her cybergoth dreads were blowing in the breeze and I was deeply Puppy Doggin' and all of a sudden I liked the Smiths. I rode that wave so hard and so far that I'm back to not liking the Smiths again, but maybe that's not the point, is it?

Re: Vegetarianism. This is also something I swore up and down in high school. Then when I was 19, I went on this zine reading tour with my right hand man Salvatore where the destination was a motherfucking debutante ball in Dallas that I had gotten us invited to because one of the debutantes briefly lived in NYC and we would do drugs together. *Anyway*, Salvatore is the son of a butcher and so he was a vegetarian. I didn't get it and was like, "That shit is for hippies, I'm gonna eat all of your dad's prosciutto," or whatever. Then we were in Dallas at the debutante ball on a ton of speed wearing these shitty thrift store tuxedos and carrying around a tub of drum tobacco like an amulet. I thought everyone would be freaked out by us because I had a mohawk and Sal had that Kevin Seconds thing where half his head was shaved, but mostly they had an easy time compartmentalizing us as the "friends from New York," and that seemed to explain everything weird about us. The only thing that successfully freaked out the squares was when dinner came and Sal traded me his steak for my vegetables. People truly lost their shit and I became a vegetarian next day. I also am not a vegetarian anymore, though I was for years, but again, that's not the point.

The point is that oftentimes the things I proclaim the loudest are the things that I end up ultimately doing and I think maybe part of why I feel the need to adamantly and publicly distance myself from them is because I'm actually getting myself used to the idea of maybe trying them out. Or something. Is that actually the point? I'm unsure. But this column isn't called Making Points With Colin Atrophy, it's called something different than that so fuck you anyway. As for the Dead Kennedys, I was like thirteen when I decided they were my favorite band forever and I mean, come on.

Look, what I'm saying is I moved out of New York like four days ago as of this writing

and an indeterminate amount of time as of your reading, because like, I don't even know who you are or when you're gonna read this. It could be any time after now or even before now because linear time is an oppressive concept that was made up by capitalism to bring you down and make you go to work on time.

I drove to Austin in two days. I ate three bags of peanut M&Ms and one dozen oatmeal cookies that my mom made for me and put in a ziplock bag. I listened to approximately twenty hours worth of this horror story podcast that Imogen told me about and I consumed exactly Thirty Hours of Energy. In the end I arrived in Austin a day and a half after I left New York, almost to the minute. My girlfriend Becca had made me a homemade *vegan* chocolate babka to welcome me so if I had been harboring any doubts about whether packing up my apartment into the back of a station wagon and moving across the country to be her Professor's Wife (which I wasn't because she rules), they would've been set aside.

I'm eating a piece of that babka right now and listening to the Popper Burns tape I wrote about last month. Last night my old friend Ben Trogdon (of the ever exciting *NUTS* Fanzine, the new issue of which has an interview with fellow columnist Bryony's band Good Throb) had an art show here and tomorrow night G.L.O.S.S. is playing and I'm very excited about establishing my new identity as a New Yorker, elsewhere. Just now Becca made a joke about some NASCAR driver and I had no idea who he was and I got to act all befuddled like, "Why would I even know about a NASCAR driver?"

So yeah, 2015 is closing out soon and I'm stoked and in love and I live in a new town for the first time in my life which is very exciting. You can still send mail to my old P.O. Box for now, it just might take me a little longer to get back to you. 442-D Lorimer St #230 / Brooklyn, NY 11206. And you can still email me sliceharvester@gmail.com. I'm excited for my future columns to all be about me being confused by shit here and I hope you are too. No cops, no creeps. Peace in the taqueria. I'm out.

Hey punx, did you know curfew doesn't run on punk time? I know it's shocking; take your time to process, but a lot of parents are actually not that cool with their kids coming home at 3:00 a.m. As a seventeen-year-old with very overbearing parents, it's hard for me to always participate in the scene as much as I'd like. And, as my friend pointed out to me the other day, there's not just punk time but queer time as well. So put the two together and you have one show that starts at 11:00 p.m., two angry parents, and three lonely and grounded kiddo punx (me, myself, and I).

Ageism is much more nuanced than other forms of marginalization in the punk community. I've never been directly belittled or harassed because of my age. Hell, a lot of the time people are impressed with the extent of my involvement in punk.

I'd also like to emphasize that most of my experience with ageism has been shaped by the NYC punk scene. After I stayed in the Bay Area and Olympia for a bit and got involved with those scenes, it is interesting to compare my relative experiences with ageism. On the West Coast I wasn't really considered "young." I was more known for my actual personality than for my age. In many spaces in NYC I definitely am known for who I am instead of for how many years I've been breathing and angry. However, many times, as soon as I drop the age bomb, that's all I am to people.

For all non-kids reading, my plea is for you to fucking treat kids like people, not like an age. How does one look past the superficiality of age? In the following I lay out some tips as to how to not be a shit and how to humanize and to welcome punk kids in your local scene. And of course all of these tips are a product of my experiences as a white, queer, able, neurotypical, CAFAB, genderfux, freaky NYC kiddo punk.

1. Fucking respect and encourage punk kids. Book us shows. Put our records out on your label. Don't change your language around us in order to be more "child friendly." Don't trivialize our problems. Understand that many of our parents don't support us, so sometimes we just need an adult who gets it and who will listen. Let us vent to you without always trying to offer up your sage "back in my day" advice. Help us reach our goals. Lend us instruments/recording equipment/DIY shit. Form a band with us. Offer us a place to stay if you have one and we need one. And for fuck's sake, stop booking good shows at 11:00 p.m. on a Tuesday night (which I know can be a hard feat, especially for touring bands, but make an effort!) For the sake of the children, go on at a reasonable hour. As stated previously, curfew doesn't run on punk time!

We're not dumb. We exist and we have real and important shit to say, so don't act like we're just following a trend and have no grasp on the sociopolitical world around us.

2. Go out of your way to talk to us and to include us (but not if you're going to be fucking creepy). Although I often pass for someone in my early twenties, I've internalized how young and small I am. I went through puberty really late, so I was always treated as though I were really young, and since I was perceived as a girl, I was treated even younger. Now, even though I am done with that shit, I still have to deal with its lingering mental effects, which makes it really fucking hard and scary to talk to people I know are older than me (especially cis dudes). But the thing is, I want to talk to all punx so badly, I have to know nothing's gonna happen. So yeah. Ageism in punk is not necessarily limited to being a direct asshole to kids, but also consists of ignoring us.

Especially because there are way fewer kid punx than adult ones, (at least in NYC), it can be really fucking intimidating to try to talk to y'all and to be in your spaces. I go to shows alone the majority of the time because I have no close punk friends (at least on this coast), but I really would like to make some.

The thing is I seriously have only met one or two NY kids who are active members in the scene (if you're out there kiddos, please talk to me) so that leaves me with people who are at least four or five years older than me. Except I'm too scared/nervous to just go up and talk to them! So if every now and then, if one of you older punx reading this wanted to talk to me first, that would be a pretty cool and inclusive thing to do (but not if you're gonna hit on me/harass me, you fucking trash scum).

3. Make more radical spaces accessible to youth. Book shows/events at a reasonable hour. Have someone be a representative for a show who offers to talk to parents about its safety. More all ages shows, more all ages venues, more boycotting non-all ages shows/venues. No more "ask a punk to find out the location of _____ show" (*as a kid, I don't have anyone to ask!*). Basically just take kids into account when creating spaces/events/shows. Think about our needs, ask us about our needs—just be fucking thoughtful.

4. Make more radical spaces specifically for youth. As a kid involved in many radical spaces, not only is it intimidating to go to these places alone, but to be the only kid there as well. We need to open up a dialogue about ageism, to have more spaces for radical youth under 21, and to make more opportunities for radical youth to meet other radical youth. I need a place to find other like-minded people my own age because DIYing is fucking lonely and sometimes I just gotta DIT.

This is also a call for youth to start getting more involved. I've spent too much time waiting for adults to make shit accessible to me. As intimidating as the scene can be, I need to initiate shit myself and get the youth together. Unity, right? Gotta unite the kids myself. Hopefully I'll be hosting a mixer at Bluestockings on the Lower East Side for radical youth in the near future, so if that applies to you, keep your eyes peeled.

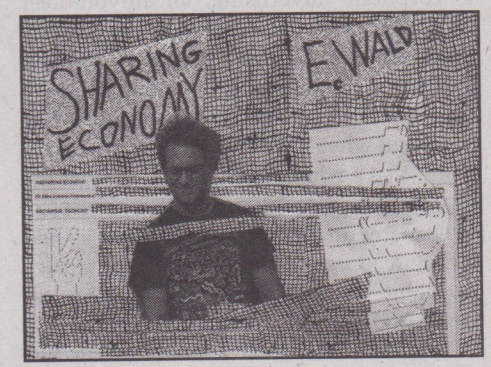
5. Youth to the front please. Physically, most kids are smaller than adults, so fucking make

some space for us in the pit so we don't get trampled. That's all. Be conscious of who you're moshing with. That goes for a lot of identity groups, not just kids.

Also, just some general tips for privileged punx (like myself) that have really been on my mind lately: Femmes (specifically PoC) to the front, bros to the back. Make some space for people with disabilities at the front. Make venues more accessible for people with all forms of dis/abilities (it's not that hard to put in a ramp). Be conscious of your privilege in the pit/at shows/in radical spaces, because there's a lot of it.

The same social hierarchies that exist in society exist in the punk community. And if we're really dedicated to abolishing the systems that capitalize off our oppression, we need to start within our own communities first. So involve and respect punk kids, that's all I ask. Inclusivity or nothing.

If you wanna talk to me and discuss music or the kyriarchy send me a letter @: Seb!!!!, 21 Cliff St, Hastings-On-Hudson, NY 10706



"Unlike you dickheads,
I welcome death."
– Watery Love, "Face the Door"

What's happening, what's really good, what's up, where am I, who are you, why am I here? Times of grim reality are upon us. Times that give you just two options: compromise or be crushed. The contrast between the windswept heights of idealism and the churlish crawl of compromise can be too much for a lot of people here in San Francisco—it's whiplash-inducing, a centripetal g-force just shy of the 10g "kill threshold." To keep a roof above your head you have to swallow your dignity and self-regard and put aside some of your time to make a living, to *face the door*.

Consider the door: to come up with burrito money and practice space rent, I serve as official keeper of the threshold at a bar in the city, one of say half a dozen here that host punk functions. All but one of these are bars first, venues second. All but maybe two now function as premier nodes for the moneyed yuppie bar crawl scene. On one side of the threshold you might have Downtown Boys and the hopeful promise of *Full Communism*, or a ten-member CCR Headcleaner jam fueled by bad acid, fake ecstasy; on the other side are drunk Belgians who heard about this place from someone at the hostel.

I could pretend my job here is to preserve the barrier and maintain the illusion of punk autonomy in the back room. Indeed, some here before me did. One of my precedents tried to keep the walls up, tell the Urban Outfitters tank top set that they "wouldn't like it" back there, if he didn't tell them to just fuck right off. This kind of condescension can exhaust you though—this guy was let go after showing up an hour late to the shift. I'd like to think I'm wiser, or that I at least have a better sense of perspective. I know the job is a lot simpler: to take enough money from the general and gig-going public to give these touring bands a fair shot at making it at least as far as the Buttonwillow Arco station after their next gig; in short, to get bands enough gas money to make it out of San Francisco alive.

But usually just doing the job isn't enough to get the job done. An example: a band of woebegone bogans gigged here a couple weeks ago. Having had at least one show cancelled due to less-than-diligent promotion, they were in poor shape, broke, exhausted. I walked in to work and saw their drummer sleeping facedown on stage. The best I could do was to make sure I was able to get enough drink tickets for them and their stressed-out tour manager. I let in none of my broke friends for free, welcomed in the drunk and quite unpunk Australians that invariably turn up for bands like these with a hearty smile and a slap on the back. The show was well attended enough, they were able to make their guarantee and we padded them out with a meal buyout, but were they even going to make it home, or would they have to begin anew in San Francisco's service industry? The question was resolved easily enough: a friend of the owner rolled in late and missed them (they were billed under a local band), and decided to pay them an extra $200 out of his own pocket to play an extra set. Everyone that played or went to this show probably felt the same way then as I did when looking at their drummer sleeping on stage: amused, a little concerned, eager to get back home. We do bar gigs ostensibly because it's the simplest, most professional way to make money, to survive tour, but why bother surviving?

Anyway back to the c-word, compromise. These are not necessarily the terms of engagement for all San Franciscans, but it does dictate the way that many of us get by. I was in a band in high school that abhorred and rejected the bar culture of San Francisco, yet three-quarters of us are now on call to work door shifts for bars in the city. We're aware of the irony, we're aware the problem gets worse with our impassive compliance. While keepers of alternative spaces get more anxious about egressing on the terms of a lease, more and more money pours into San Francisco's food and beverage economy. Small venues are able to kick a small fraction of this to bands, some more craftily than others. The sound engineering staff at one of the larger bars here worked out a good deal: everyone entering, even just the North Face wearing crowd out on the town to see and be seen, drink and be drunk, is hit with the cover. Out of maybe 500 in and out, a median of 30 people of them to see a couple local bands gig. The bands generally get a tidy three-figure flat fee to put in the tank or kick to a cause of their choice. These are terms I can live with.

You can compromise, sure, but at least use your head, make these times work for you before you get used. The streets are paved with gold, the triple-seamed jeans are lined with cash and credit. If your band is going to fight for scraps, tear off a big piece. Let's say you're licensing music for a medical data collection startup's ad: demand a tracking device for your bassist who keeps wandering off at gas stations; demand a full sandwich spread from the production company; demand compensation on another order of magnitude. You're worth it, raise the bar.

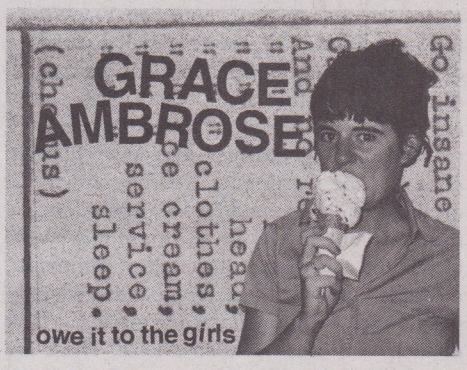
ENDNOTES:

1) I mentioned my high school band earlier in this column: believe it or not we're still playing music together, and I'm less embarrassed than ever. Getting the *MRR* interview treatment was a delight, a longtime daydream come true. Thanks to my dear friend Max Wickham and my sister Anna for asking us what the hell we're doing. We're hitting the road soon. Come say hi to us in the Northwest, we're crawling through with Asthma the week before Thanksgiving. Each of us should have a couple new tapes, which you can peep at: badbadbadtsa.bandcamp.com

2) Three-quarters of the new band I'm in have a column here and I was the only one who didn't bring it up in this section last month. I don't know what I can tell you that Grace and Marissa haven't said already; I am incredibly lucky to be in a band with real stars, with actual geniuses, with my friend Wormhole drumming as well as he does. We'll probably have more tapes ready by the time this hits the newsstands: m-o-z-a-r-t.bandcamp.com, stream it to believe it.

3) I mentioned the World last month and alluded to them only having a live video on Youtube or something. Sure enough, they put actual recordings online the day after we went to print. I wish the bass was mixed higher, but listen up to one of my favorite new Bay Area bands: https://soundcloud.com/the-world-819194084

4) Have you worked in the "gig economy"? Is it putting you out of business? Taxi drivers, ridesharers, bike messengers, postmates, instant shoppers, valets: I have some questions for you. eli@maximumrocknroll.com.



I sent the magazine to print on Thursday, got on a plane on Friday, and walked into the Halloween cover show at the new DIY Space for London on Saturday evening. It's Monday now and I'm writing this from a couch in South London, emerging from the jetlagged delirium of the last few days and already mourning my impending return to San Francisco. But before that—pints at the Rochester, roti in the cemetery, a few days of gigs for Static Shock Weekend. Looking forward.

I came to London in search of some inspiration. Not a day goes by in San Francisco where there isn't a conversation about real estate and housing, about how it is a city that feels aggressively inhospitable to artists, punks, and freaks of all stripes. We're in crisis here, sure, and everyone who lives across the bay in Oakland likes to remind us of it (daily), but they're about to be in the same boat: Uber HQ swooping into downtown, condos and lofts as far as the eye can see, the coffee shop with a snow white interior opening in the middle of a historically Black neighborhood (you can't make this shit up). It is a shitty fucking existence, and some days it feels like it might be easier to capitulate to capitalism and roll over, list my room on Airbnb, and only eat meals that I can order on my iPhone.

London is another city where it can feel hard to be alive. They have condos too (lots of them), restaurants that serve only imported American sugary cereals, legislation that has put a long-standing history of squatting and occupation into a death spiral. Ultimately, though, London and the Bay Area are not that different from most big metropolises in our increasingly neoliberal world. The crises might seem starker, but this kind of insidious change is happening all over. The conversation I seem to have with almost everyone I know is that they don't want to live where they are, but they don't know where to go where things might be "better."

I'm asked almost daily if *MRR* is going to move to the East Bay. There are plenty of arguments for and against a move (better left for another column). Ultimately, the option is always on the table but a visit to DIY Space for London has reminded me of what I often think, that it is important that we stay put, that we dig our heels in and resist the forces that want us out of here, that it's part of our mandate to maintain a house full of dirty Socialists in a neighborhood full of well-groomed Liberals.

Later in these pages, Toronto activist Zoë Dodd says, "Governments fear people." I love this interview, mostly because Zoë has a way of speaking in plain language, an ability to succinctly sum up great evils, to make evident how we are all impacted by and complicit in the systems designed to constrict us. Governments fear people, so they make it difficult for us to gather, they teach us to fear collaboration. We have to resist that and part of that means celebrating the examples that inspire us.

DIY Space for London is incredible. In two days I saw a packed gig, a community flea market, collective meetings in action, the launch of a vegan café. There's a meeting room and an office and a backyard and a bar and toilets and storage and a record shop and a practice space and an incredible show space (big but not too big) with a perfectly punk stage (just high enough to see the bands, still low enough to feel like a "gig" instead of a "concert"). The space took on several different lives over the course of the weekend and I look forward to seeing it morph and shift several times over in the next few days. Tomorrow night I'm going to a film screening and hopefully at some point they'll let me paint something or clean the toilets or wash dishes behind the bar. Entirely volunteer-run, a true co-operative, a beacon for us all.

It's a reminder that what is radical about punk music is not usually the music itself, or the face-value politics of the lyrics of self-proclaimed "political" bands. Contemporary punk can hardly claim to be as politically motivated and relevant as movements like Black Lives Matter and Occupy (see Stuart Schrader's excellent response to the question "Is punk still political?" in a recent "Create To Destroy!" feature on our website for more thinking on this); and while Nuclear War was certainly a threat, attending a demonstration might perhaps have been more effective than going to a crust gig and listening to some man shout about it. There is radical potential in what we do, though, and most of it comes on a local level. We can use our love of loud noise and ~*sick riffs*~ as a framework on which to hang radical activity, use the ritual of the gig as an entry point for figuring out how we can actively resist the closing in of the city around us, harness the catalytic space-making potential of DIY and punk communities at a time when carving out physical space for ourselves is a radical and difficult task. All the odds were against them in London and they've come out on top. How can you do the same in your town?

It's a reminder that the means by which we do things are what is important to me about punk. I've said this a lot recently, but I didn't decide to become coordinator of *Maximum* because I love writing about punk music. I became coordinator of *Maximum* because I believe in the power of independent media. The same sentiment applies to autonomous spaces. There are many in London who were content to just go down to the pub for a gig—they aren't the people involved in building a new vision of the future. DSFL's raison d'être isn't to function like the back room of a pub. It's much bigger than that. By the same token, the hows and whys of what we choose to cover here at the magazine are as important as the content itself: a resistance to corporate advertising, an all-volunteer staff, a refusal to participate in the content-production death drive of online publishing, a magazine made for punks about punks by punks. Yes, even the newsprint cover. The hows and whys have always been important here—that's what distinguishes us from the cool-hunters of publications that specialize in chewing up the underground and selling a declawed, regurgitated version of it back to people who think that's what they want. Don't forget it.

Long live *Maximum Rocknroll*, long live DIY Space for London, write to me and tell me about the autonomous social center you're going to build in your town: grace@maximumrocknoll.com

ENDNOTES:

1) I couldn't go to Not Dead Yet but I heard it was great. Next year! I'm playing the Mollot tape Dan brought back for me on repeat, though. Feral punk with hardcore tendencies from some young freaks. Into it. (mollot.bandcamp.com)

2) Can't *wait* to listen to the *Dookie* cover record 924 Gilman produced, featuring covers in styles including "punk," "twang," "indie," "classical," and "EDM." Sure to be a thrilling artistic document. You can't make this shit up.

3) We found a new coordinator. You'll meet him in January. Can't wait.

4) Everyone always acts like they need to be invited to be interviewed in *MRR*. You don't. Get a friend to ask you some questions, send us a bunch of pictures, and we'll go from there.

TO LIVE A LIE

ACxDC - Discography LP

An epic conglomeration of all the band's output sans the new LP. Comes on either limited black vinyl or picture disc, Snatch them up before they are all gone.

CHEST PAIN - Weltschmerz LP

Austin, Texas weirdout powerviolence hardcore group put together their opus. Think Gasp meets Swans meets Killing Joke all blended with some Man Is The Bastard.

FISTULA - Vermin Prolificus LP

TLAL's first sludge release and this one will melt your face. In the vein of 16 and Cattle Press, Fistula bring a handful of new tracks that twist and crush. 15 years as a band and still killing it.

STILL HOT: TLAL Vol II LP, The Kill LP, Mindless EP, BearTrap EP
OUT NEXT: Afternoon Gentleman 7", Six Brew Bantha new LP

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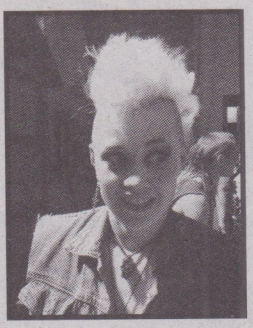
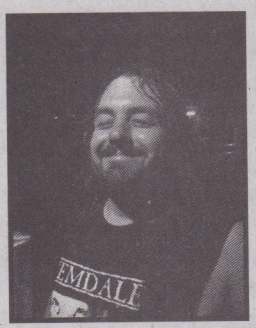
WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

This month's question was: "What was the best era for Australian punk and why?" Asked at the PEOPLE PROBLEM show at "Secret" Warehouse, in Melbourne, Australia. By Tessa Tribe.

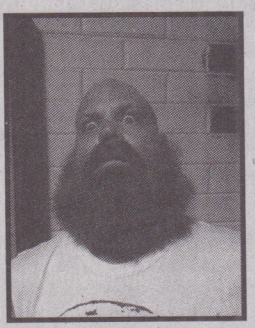
Cairo, Melbourne, Australia
I think now, for me. There're lots of really good bands at the moment. Shows are really fun. Bands like Scab Eater & Heavy Breather—shows just go off. There're more young people into it now.



Nissa, Sydney, Australia
When I first started going to shows at Maggotville warehouse in Sydney: the first time I saw Pisschrist, ABC Weapons, being in massive awe of Scum System Kill when I was sixteen in 2004. Seeing all the older crust girls and being in total awe of them, my mind was blown by those first massive punk shows.



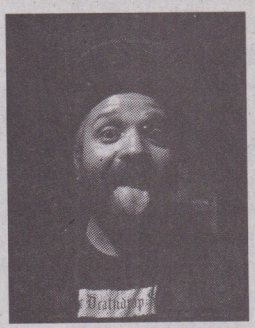
Christoph, Melbourne, Australia
Now, because it's probably the least self-conscious it ever has been. There are good bands that are doing really cool stuff, regardless of whether anyone would listen or not. There are definitely more women involved than when I started going to shows in the 90's, which is great. The younger crowd is more active, involved, and encouraged.



Pete, Melbourne, Australia
The early to mid 90's, when I first got introduced to punk and grindcore, bands like Warsore, Heads Kicked Off, Unit 1174. I met lots of different people from lots of different age groups playing energetic and heavy music, but it came to an abrupt ending when a lot of heroin got involved in that scene and ruined it.

Kalem, Papamoa, New Zealand
I can't remember the years, but bands like Crux, Love Like Electrocution, and Diamond Sea. Maybe like a seven-year period? That bit was cool because these bands were doing something that was "hipster" by New Zealand standards, but they were all still punks and made it seem fine to do your own thing. Love Like Electrocution came to New Zealand, they were great.

Troy, Adelaide, Australia
For me it was the early 2000's in Adelaide. There was a really solid strong punk scene there: lots of awesome bands that didn't really get out much from Adelaide, because at the time not a lot of people were touring around. The Jerks, Stolen Youth, a whole bunch of small bands only went for six months then dropped off. But they were all really solid.

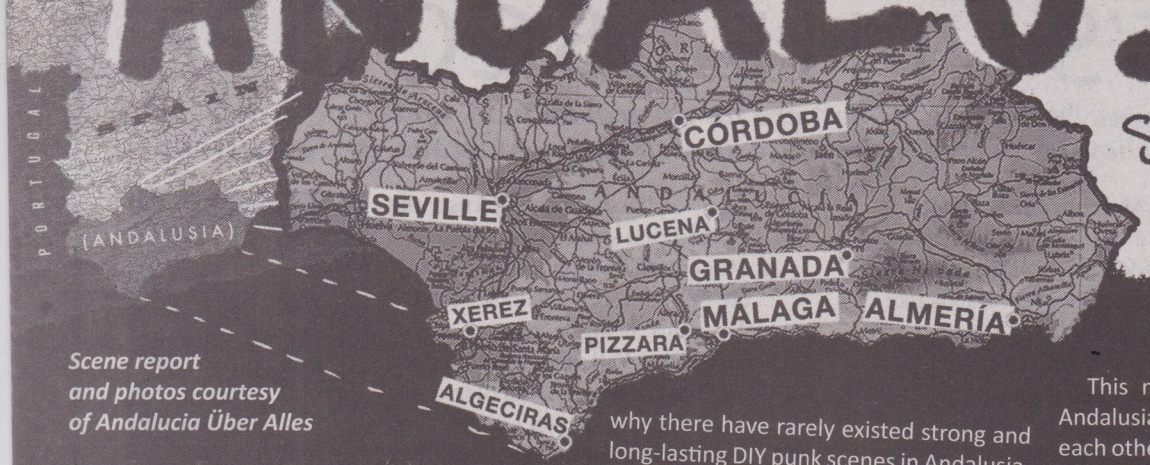


Marcus, London, England
The late 2000's are pretty prominent from my perspective, because that's when Pisschrist, ABC Weapons, and Schifosi stood out in my mind. Coming from London and Europe, we all heard of these bands through tours and getting their records. There was quite a connection between the Australian scene and Europe.

Lisa, Brisbane, Australia
The Burst City era in Brisbane around 2010. It was an all ages venue run by Will from Teargas. I used to hang out there every weekend. My band played a lot of our first shows there. It was a great space and time.

ANDALUSIA

scene report



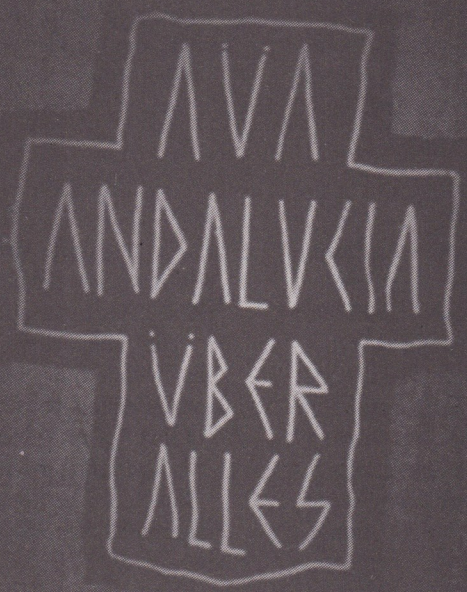
Scene report and photos courtesy of Andalucia Über Alles

ANDALUSIA, THE SOUTHERN REGION of the Iberian Peninsula, is a cursed fertile land that has been sadly harmed by greed for centuries. Nowadays, the offspring of aristocrats and landowners still rule over the lives of those who don't own anything with inhumane labor contracts. All this is hidden by the establishment with a thin layer of inspiring modernity and progress, an attempt to camouflage the dirty reality of this region: unemployment, poverty, ignorance, massive emigration, and aggressive colonization from the rich European countries in the form of "luxury tourism." From the perspective of the northern regions, Andalusia is a mixture of clichés, people spending the whole day lazing around, telling jokes, or dancing flamenco.

Always being late and backwards in contrast with other regions like Catalonia or the Basque Country means that trying to carry out DIY projects in Andalusia can be frustrating. There are deeply rooted cultural forms of expression in this region, which people embrace very early in their lives. Though punk, hardcore, and similar kinds of music don't reach as many people here as in other places, this reality provides a feeling of excitement when it comes to being a punk. Everything is yet to be done and we know there's nothing to lose because if we don't do things ourselves, there won't be a scene at all.

Despite all of this, Andalusia has been the birthplace of important bands that have been nationally or even internationally relevant: MG15, TNT, KGB. There have always existed intermittent scenes in different spots since the influence of punk culture reached the region. Its geographic location, and the differing perspectives in its big cities (in contrast with other cities like Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Bilbao, etc.), can be understood as the main reasons why there have rarely existed strong and long-lasting DIY punk scenes in Andalusia. However, there are sporadic explosions, born out of the effort of small groups of people who, facing more challenges than in other places, have managed to set up gigs, edit zines, run distros and labels, and self-release records with their bands.

Recently, things have been changing. Our DIY punk scene is currently experiencing an exciting moment: you are constantly hearing about new bands,



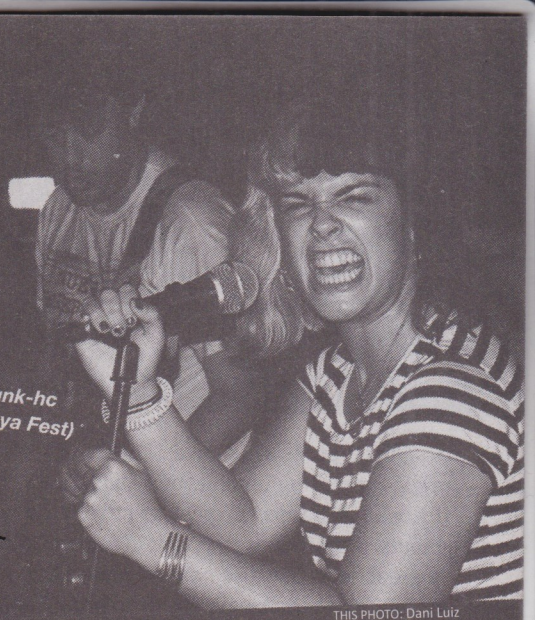
new places to set up gigs, and new distros and labels. Most importantly, there are lots of people supporting all of these DIY initiatives. Andalusian cities are quite far from other cities, creating a kind of isolation of our punk scenes from more active ones in the rest of the country. These other cities have had DIY networks for years, partially because they're close to each other and the border with France. For this same reason, the influence of foreign initiatives, and especially bands, which are always crucial for a scene to grow, has been more limited in Andalusia.

This may be part of the reason why Andalusian bands sound so different from each other, especially in contrast with other scenes where many bands have a similar sound and style, depending on the period of time you look at. Generally, trends that come from other regions or other countries reach Andalusia late and in a distorted way. This generates an outspoken environment at gigs, at which there can be found a less preconceived or posing attitude than in other places where scenes are larger and gigs take place more regularly.

On the other hand, since DIY culture is not as developed as in other scenes, sometimes you have to deal with people who don't give a fuck about the work behind everything. It feels like some people think that punk is just another product, ready to be consumed or thrown away when you're tired of it. At many gigs it is quite common to cope with authoritarian or macho attitudes. To our mind, there is no point in reproducing the same realities you're trying to run away from at gigs. Many people wear anarchist patches, but behave in the same coercive way the system does. Fortunately, there is a growing rejection of these kinds of attitudes, and though sometimes facing these realities can generate divisions and problems, it is something that hopefully will help to create a healthier and more coherent scene.

Much of what we are experiencing now in the different Andalusian scenes is owed to the hardcore scene in Xerez, a city where there has always been a lot of punk stuff going on, like the punk band TXUMINOS IMBERBES, which has been playing since the '80s. For more than ten years now, a collective called La Otra Opción Crew has been working hard to keep alive a scene that has been a model for others when it comes to setting up gigs, getting foreign bands to play, going on tour, and self-releasing stuff. Good hardcore and punk bands like TRUTH THROUGH FIGHT, SECOND DIVISION, PACTO DE SANGRE,

La URSS



(at Punk-hc Playa Fest)

THIS PHOTO: Dani Luiz

MINORITY OF ONE, DECADENCE, HIGH ROLLERS, PODER DE CAMBIA, DRY DOGS and HOT GARLIC have been born out of this scene. TRUTH THROUGH FIGHT (2004-2014), was one of the most inspiring bands in this new era; lots of people would come to their gigs, singing along and going crazy in small venues or squats. In many ways, they showed people how a DIY band worked, and seeing them tour around Europe or America and self-release stuff encouraged many people to form their own bands and try to do something similar. They showed that if you really wanted to, you could do it, too.

Soon after, Granada would become another reference point thanks to the birth of LA URSS. After how much they have achieved, it can be said that they are the most transcendent current Andalusian punk band. They are one of those bands that leaves a mark and becomes a reference, like KGB or TNT. Together with TRUTH THROUGH FIGHT, LA URSS has been an encouraging example for more than ten years in terms of sound, lyrics, artwork, and DIY philosophy. The band COPYCATS appeared shortly after. They have an amazing sound and are a good example of how different Andalusian bands sound not only from each other, but from other good bands in the country.

Throughout the years, these bands have been gaining relevance nationally and even internationally, having toured around Europe and North America. Also worth mentioning is La Corporación, a DIY label parallel to LA URSS which they used to self-release their records and set up gigs in different points of the country. Recently, many bands and DIY initiatives have arisen in Granada, such as MIËRDA, an extraordinary D-beat band; CARNE, a band featuring members of LA URSS and A RAURA URA (Adra, Almería) with an incredible '80s sound that everybody should listen to; CHARNADO, a fast female-fronted punk band featuring members of COPYCATS; PERRO MOJADO, a garage punk band; El Osario Fest, a festival organized every year featuring hardcore, D-beat and crust bands; and Cosas Que Hacen punk festival, which is more focused on punk and garage bands.

Another key spot is Almería, home to the most authentic punk scene in Andalusia. In this southeastern city gigs are set up quite frequently, thanks to the fact that there are really good local bands which are always willing to play and, mostly, that there is an incredibly friendly group of people who always give support and help to make everything work. This is something you can appreciate at the yearly Punk-hc Playa Fest, a festival they have been setting up on the beach for the past nine years. It gathers lots of punks from different points of Andalusia and the rest of the country. Besides being situated at the southern edge of the east coast of the peninsula, many bands on tour stop in Almería after having played in northern regions on the coast that have active scenes, like Valencia, Alicante, or Murcia. In Almería you can find hardcore bands like DIRTY REASON, who toured around Mexico and the US in 2013 with ACCIDENTE (Madrid) and LOUDER THAN NOISE; punk bands that have been playing for some years now like LLORSSAIRS or PERROS DEL DESIERTO; Oi! bands like the LAGERS; or bands leaning towards more metal or power violence sounds like DOPAMINE WARRIORS or RENCOR.

Málaga is one of the cities whose scene has been really active for many years now, with bands like NO PICKY, who have been playing for more than twenty years. Though there has always been a stronger tendency towards hardcore (gigs are currently set up by a collective called Málaga HxC), in recent years there has been a growing punk scene with bands like ESTUPAS (now defunct); RALF, who just released a wonderful demo; and SPUTNIK VENENO, a band with a knackering sound that's similar

Truth Through Fight

Estupas

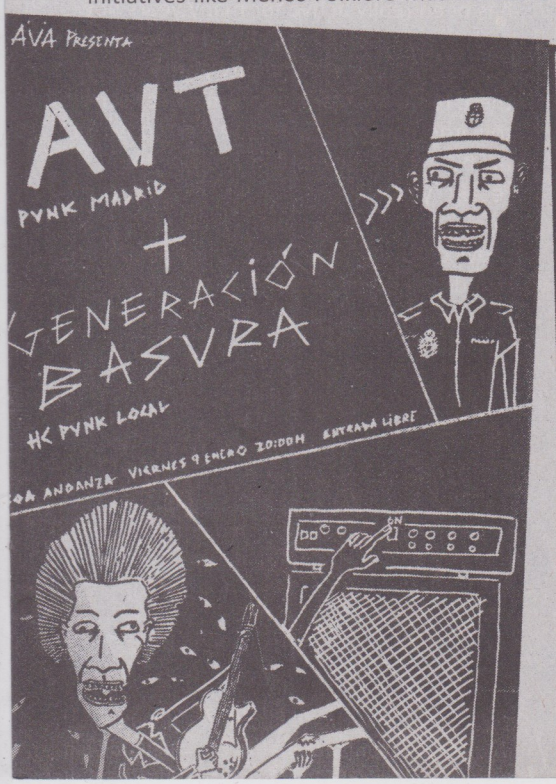
to classic punk bands like SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS. There's a gig-promoting organization called Fuck the Police Promotions, focused on hardcore, crust, grindcore, powerviolence, and sludge bands. Many bands that tour in Andalusia come to Málaga, which is great news because now we have a DIY network between three or four cities, making it easier to bring bands to play down south. There's also a small village near Málaga called Pizarra, in which a very friendly guy has a bar called Junco Rock where gigs can be set up quite easily and bands are treated very well. This same guy played in a horror-punk band called ENTERRADORES that is worth checking out, though they recently split after playing together since 2005.

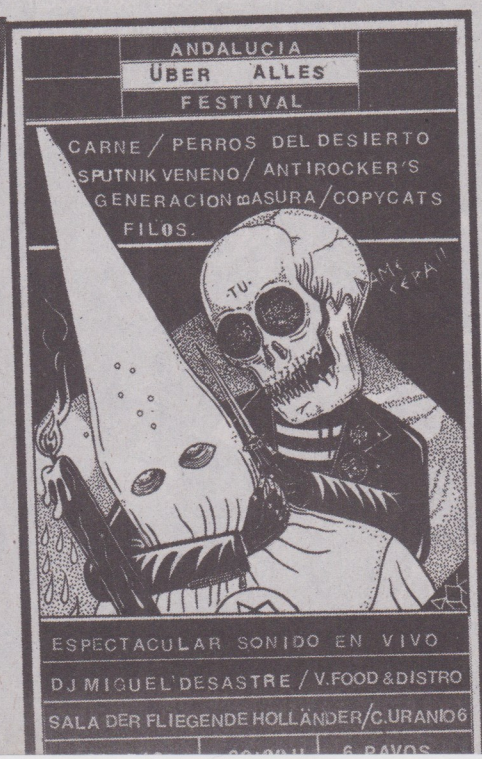
Everything is yet to be done and we know there's nothing to lose because

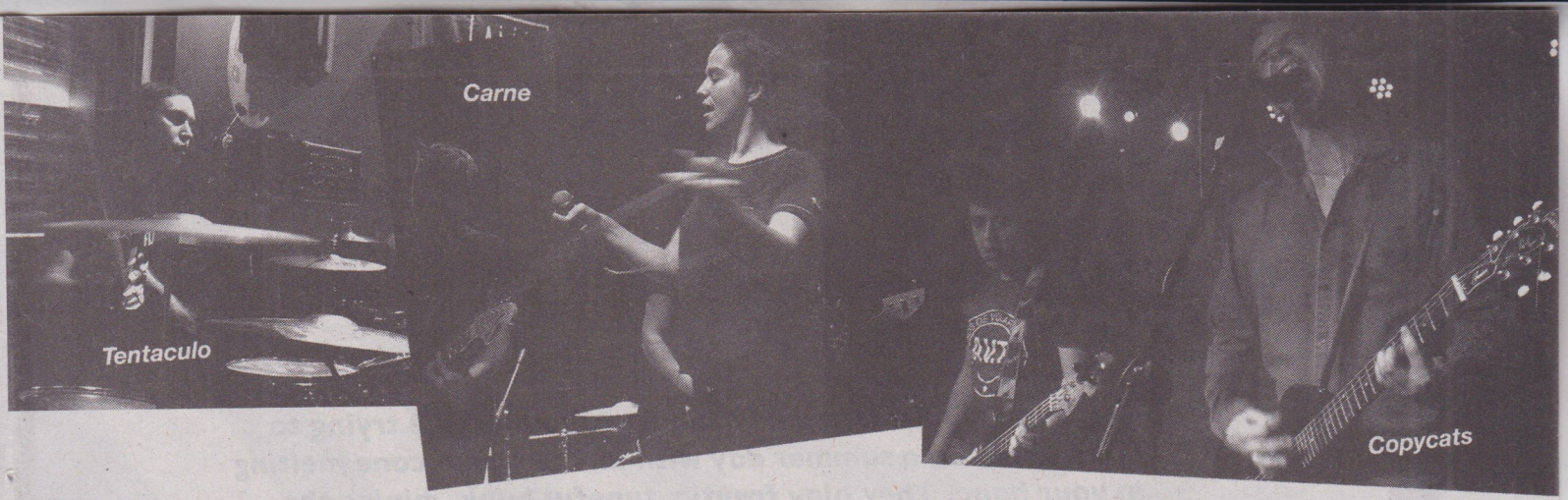
In Lucena, a village in the province of Córdoba, a DIY label and distro called Walking Is Still Honest has been running since 2011, releasing hardcore and punk bands like ACCIDENTE, DUELO, VIVA BELGRADO, OSOLUNA, and URA.

In Algeciras, a port city at the very southern edge of the region with very limited resources, some punk, hardcore and grindcore bands have managed to thrive in the last ten years, such as CUBO DE MIERDA, KPH, and BORED TEENAGERS. Also, it is worth mentioning the work that the independent fanzine *Kristal* has been carrying out for 25 years.

Despite being a city with a population of almost one million people, Seville hasn't had a proper scene like those in Almería, Granada, or Xerez for years. Recently, however, initiatives like Menos Folklore Más Hardcore and Muy Punk Festival, have started to change that. A couple of years ago, some punks, decided if they wanted to have a proper scene they had to stop moaning and take up a DIY initiative that would make it possible to regularly have gigs, help bands on tour and generate a favorable environment for punks to organize themselves and start bands, labels, distros or whatever they felt like doing. In February 2014, a new project was born: Andalucía Über Alles (AÜA), a DIY initiative formed by several punks with the common goal of fostering an active DIY punk scene through which any kind of punk-related project could thrive. AÜA has been working for almost two years now and its efforts are bearing fruit. Gigs are being set up quite regularly, and a label and a distro have been born, releasing mostly bands from Andalusia, but from other places as well, like NUEVA GENERACIÓN (Murcia) and AVT (Madrid). Soon, new projects will come to light, such as an Andalusian punk compilation tape and a zine. Besides, AÜA has regularly collaborated with graphic artists connected to the punk scene such as Rafa el Doc, Mäik, Fvego and Jess García, believing that punk is not just about music, and that screen printing and fanzines are tools that must be used as means of expression and dissemination of punk culture. Last Christmas, the first Festival Andalucía Über Alles took place, in which bands like CARNE, COPYCATS and MIËRDA played, and this coming Christmas we will have







the second edition, featuring bands like SUDOR and LA URSS. Though some good bands have sprung out of this new scene, like GENERACIÓN BASURA and NADSAT, in the last ten years Seville has had a good number of punk and hardcore bands, some of which are still active, such as FOUR AND DEFORMS, 33 REVOLUCIONES, FILOS, HDR, CONVICCIÓN, LET'S THROW IT, SEX FÜHRERS, TENTÁCULO, ANTIROCKERS, and YIHAD.

Together with Andalucía Über Alles, in Seville there's been a DIY hardcore initiative called Union Hardcore Krew running for a few years, closely connected with the hardcore scene in Xerez, and organizing gigs on a regular basis. They are working as a label as well and recently released a CD by PODER DE CAMBIAR. For two years now, they have organized a festival featuring hardcore bands called Southside Fest, in which bands like ACCIDENTE and MINORITY OF ONE played last year. The third edition will take place this coming December.

Most of the punk and hardcore gigs set up in Seville take place in a venue called Sala Hollander, a place run by two friendly and hardworking guys who have been supporting all kinds of underground initiatives and music since 2009.

In general, it can be said that the punk scene in Andalusia is experiencing a moment of glory. Not because nothing existed before (there has always been DIY punk stuff going on), but because in the last few years, several DIY projects have been growing in different points of the region thanks to people 100% involved and willing to work hard, and bonds between the different scenes have been consolidated. This generates a constant feeling of optimism towards everything that is being done, especially with regard to the increasing number of new bands that are being formed. Though it is still hard to have a regular influx of bands from outside Andalusia coming to play, bands are getting more and more interested in coming down south. This is due to the incredible work punks are carrying out in their own scenes, as bands that come to play are generally treated well and you get more and more people coming to the gigs. Besides, as more and more Andalusian punk bands go out on tour and get to be known, people in the north realize that there is a lot going on here (a lot of people still get surprised when they hear that there're people in the south organizing DIY gigs). Maybe here in Andalusia there aren't as many bands and active scenes as in other places, but despite the difficulties imposed by the reality of this region, the different punk scenes in Andalusia are thriving, and there's no doubt this is only the beginning.

if we don't do things ourselves, there won't be a scene at all.

If anyone reading this article is interested in coming to play to Andalusia, getting more info, or putting any project forward, don't hesitate to contact us or the people in any of the scenes we have written about. The only requirement for us is that you share our philosophy and way of doing things: DIY.

For more info, check out
adaluciauberalles.blogspot.com.es
almeriadiy.blogspot.com.es / lacorporaciondiscos.blogspot.com.es

URANIUM CLUB

The Minneapolis Uranium Club Band sounds like trying to drive home on a summer day with an ice cream cone melting in your hand. They play frantic, tuneful punk, mining the tradition of the irreverent art school crowd as much as the delirium of American excess. Harry and Teen Man play guitar and sing, Brendan plays bass and sings, and Matt plays drums. I emailed the band some questions and heard back from the Uranium Club hive mind or the lawyer for the Sunbelt Chemical Corporation. Hard to say.

Introduction and interview by Shivaun Watchorn
Photos by Cyrus Aluni

Tell me a little about how this band came to be. Who or what is Teen Man?
The band came together like any rock and roll band: we were the only members in the club who could play instruments. We played all the classics at the club mixers until we found our own way of doing things. It's fun to dink around in the laundry room, basement, living room, upstairs workspace, or even the garage, but how far can that really take you? We needed more. We're lucky enough to be members of a club that has a good working relationship with organizations who support the arts. Sunbelt was the big lucky fish to bite our little worm when we were ready to commit to our good-times-after-work. But along with a helping hand, compromises have to be made. When you work for someone, they're only concerned with bottom lines. "How can we market this? Who's the shy one? Who's the Justin Bieber of this *Mickey Mouse Club?*" If you want appeal, you need personality, and boy, did they give it to us! Handed down from the boardroom, a piece of paper that says "Teen Man™." Personality at its most extreme.

I see you had a mix-up at the pressing plant and got a different band's center labels. Did they get yours? Who does the design for your releases?
Yes, embarrassingly, it's true, and we're dealing with it the best we can. We want to do right by anyone who bought the record, so we do offer to make up for it. For corrected labels, send a self-addressed and stamped envelope to:
Teen Man's Penthouse
204 3rd Ave South
Minneapolis, MN 55408

We want buying and listening to our record to be easy for people, with as few bumps in the road as possible. We don't hold anything against our friends at the plant in the Czech Republic, but to stay away from future blunders like this we're going to personally oversee all record production, even if it means taking a vacation to the Czech Republic for quality control.

We were given a great team of designers for the LP, and that's one of the best things we've gotten out of our endorsement. It's too bad that because of the corporate nature of the whole deal the designers can't be credited properly by name. We're in a climate where the designers who worked hard on the realistic taste of the GreatValue hot dog flavored potato chips only got credited as Wal-Mart. You do what you can.

When I listen to your EP, I hear *Hardcore*-era Devo, the Randoms, and the Fall, without Mark E. Smith's languidness. Your music has been called minimalist, but more than that I find an appealing compactness to it. I also don't find it self-consciously retro (despite the comparisons I just made), which is a good thing in my book. What has influenced you, as a band and personally? Do you have any spiritual and musical kin making music today?
We have a lot of shared interests that we play off of in the band, but we haven't tried to emulate anything specifically. We think we sound like the Sex Pistols misfiring. There are some people that really percolate our pots. We like Buckminster Fuller for forward thinking on transportation and housing and Marcel Duchamp for knowing how important concept and humor are. The subjects we talk about in our songs share the same kind of interests Diane Arbus and Mary Ellen Mark had in photographing twins and kids smoking. We admire Kraftwerk for their commitment to such a dialed-in aesthetic but still being open to evolution. We've spent a lot of time at the clubhouse talking about chindogu, Kenji Kowakami's unuseless objects.

As far as musical kin, there are some Minneapolis bands we like to play with around town, like John Scary and the Pen Test, but we don't really get out enough to meet people. We're navel-

gazers and we just haven't tried to participate in something bigger than ourselves. Introversion and geographical isolation contribute to that. We know we don't exist in a vacuum, but we're too preoccupied with our own inside jokes to remember that.

What is your process for writing music? Is there one person who does most of the songwriting? Do you all come up with riffs?

We work from a template we adapted from a business called the National Pen (not pencil!) Company, who make personalized, promotional office novelties, or "luxury gifts," as they'd put it. Riff or riffs. Loose playing. Acknowledgement of working elements. Reduction of non-working elements. Approval by superiors. Words, or not. Arrangement. Special additions. Words, if "not" was previously chosen. Approval by superiors, part two. The process sounds a lot more exciting than it really is.

Who is the Sunbelt Chemical Corporation? I've heard they're bankrolling your band à la Scion. You're the Magrudergrind of minerals.

We could say we regret the business-minded decisions we made, but that won't get us anywhere. Money doesn't grow on trees anymore. The Sunbelt family has always been around the clubhouse, and they've had their hands in different pockets of the club. Right now we're the pockets, keeping their hands warm, giving them a place to put their toys, and something to do with their hands in public. If you can't tell, we can't explicitly admit to being bankrolled by them (or else we won't get paid). What we can say is that they provide the finest mid-grade stuff, if that's your kind of thing. We know it's ours!

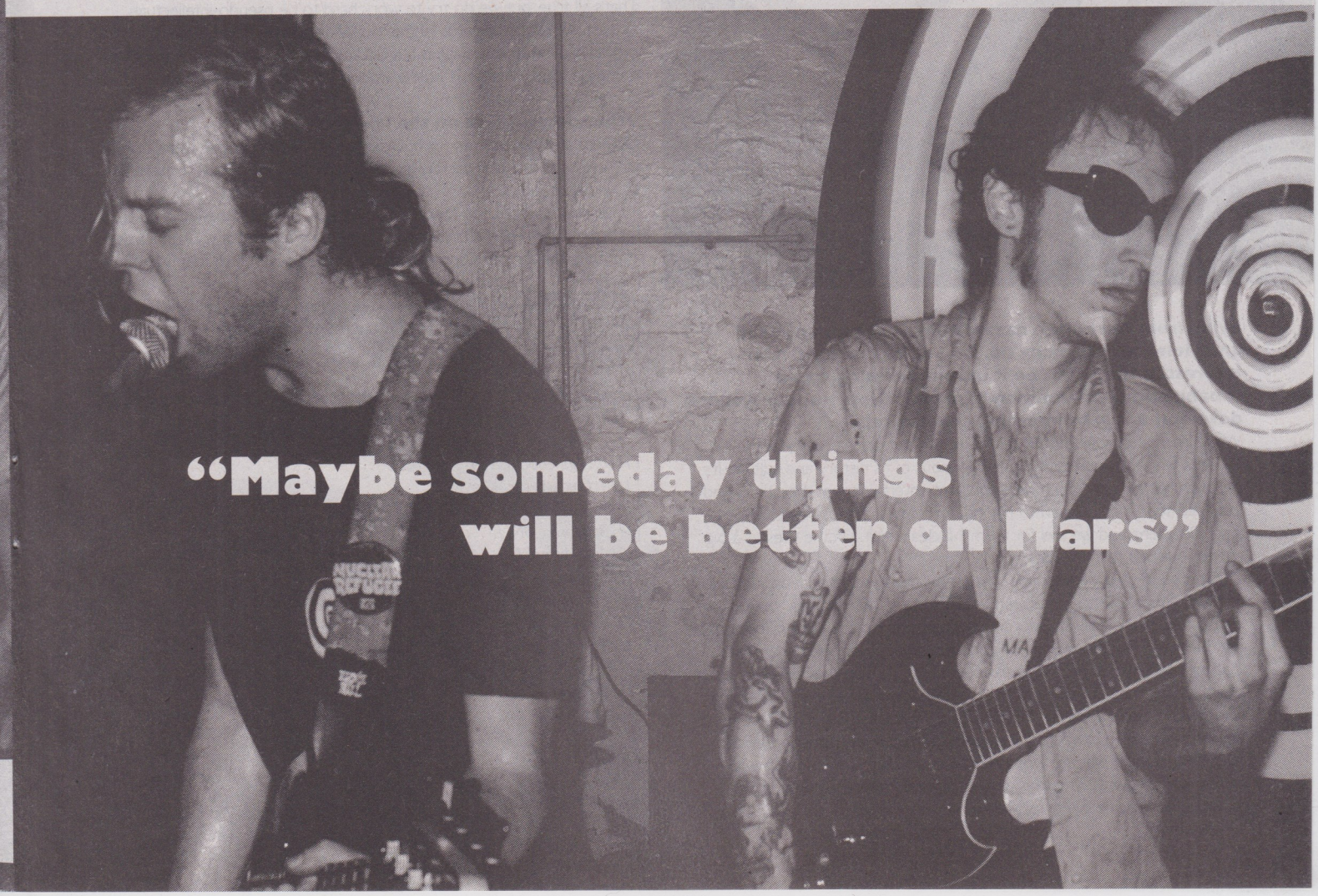
Are we happy about it all? Sometimes you have to accept your per diem and wait for the contract to run up. Lou Reed told everyone *Metal Machine Music* was his interpretation of Beethoven and now people call it an avant-garde masterpiece. He turned around later and told everyone it was all just bullshit to fulfill his contract. A true contrarian after our own heart! We have a phrase for that kind of thing: Teen Man's Lies. We don't call it lying (we call them Teen Man's Secrets), but it's safe to say we're at least honest in an artistic sense.

Philosophically, and to some degree musically, you ally yourselves with bands like Devo, whose music was nominally secondary to a larger artistic schema that critiqued, ridiculed, and acquiesced to corporate control in the music industry to serve an ideological end. What value do you find in this approach in 2015, when we are decades into monetary and creative murkiness in independent music?

When it comes down to it, what we put our value in is narrative, but we want to give enough room for the listener to have their own say in what the concept is. If you choose to use the concept in a political critique, then we welcome that. Truth, lies, humor, secrecy, cancer, Alzheimer's, human beings, the lottery, worship, causation, history, technology, chickens, eggs, nuclear development, vagueness, and corporate control are all valued parts of the narrative. Reality is shaped by what is important to an individual. We might not have a noble, critical reason for bringing up those issues, and it might only be for personal fulfillment. Nothing we do as a band is going to help someone who is starving or correct the injustices of the world. The world is unjust and it's always going to be. People feel like it's their inherent duty to comment on that. There's value in that, but it's not our place right now. It's too hard to reinvent a band like Crass. Maybe someday things will be better on Mars.

Why so much ambiguity and obfuscation in the presentation of your music? Why balk at sincerity and straightforwardness?

The truth is predictable until you hit the point of novelty, the point where



you aren't following things by the numbers anymore. It's when things actually become spontaneous and creative. In chess it's called being out of book, and we'd much rather be out of book than straightforward.

We're in a time where information is more available than ever. It's also a time when anyone can chime in with their perspective. Every person can shine a light on a subject until it's exposed from every angle, until there's nothing interesting left to look at, and you're left with a stale image. We want to have creative control, so we have to obscure the facts and the boring and predictable things if we want to keep things interesting for ourselves.

Saying we're sincere about being insincere would be too much of cliché, but just because we're interested in humor and a creative version of the truth doesn't mean we lack sincerity in what we do.

Many of your lyrics are set in the American West, and the Sunbelt Chemical Corporation seems to belong to those environs as well. The West can be a very desolate place, and humans have exploited its isolation and sparseness to tremendous profit and environmental ruin. I'm reminded of Rebecca Solnit's book *Savage Dreams*. I didn't know John Wayne (and many other cast and crew members) got cancer from filming *The Conqueror* in the Utah desert near the Nevada Test Site until I read that book. It's very strange to me to think of entertainers

dying from workplace hazards borne of human greed and violence, but many do. Do you have a particular interest in the West, be it uranium mining, rapid urbanization, environmental exploitation, nuclear weapon development, or something else entirely?

We're interested in all of that, but we're not as into the reality of the West as we are in our own falsified versions of its history and culture. It's too bad that some of the most important entertainers of their time died from radiation exposure while filming their own fictitious stories. There's a parallel there, and we feel for them. Nuclear testing in the West is a big part of our narrative for sure.

Operation Upshot-Knothole was a set of heavier detonations, as well as some smaller, easier-to-use atomic artillery shells, done to gear up for the big boys of Bikini Atoll. St. George, Utah, got the most nuclear fallout from that Nevada Test Site, where *The Conqueror* was filmed. We're surprised that this story gets much more exposure (get it?) than the disturbing events of what happened in Las Vegas at the same time. Sunbelt had something to do with a failed attempt to keep people in Las Vegas safe, and we're working with them towards transparency about what happened. It's all really sad. Nuclear warfare won't be the worst thing we come up with to project our own self-hatred onto the world, though. Technology is exponential. Imagine the possibilities.

There's a widely circulating idea that the Midwest is so boring that bands have no choice but to dedicate themselves fully to their art. I've heard this especially in regards to Ohio, though I think other non-Midwesterners think this about the whole region. I think it's a really romantic idea in a sense. What do you think about that?

Does it come down to "if you're bored, then you're boring"? Are people from Los Angeles really all that interesting? Real rock and roll comes from the Midwest, there's just not as many people around to see it happen. That's why Penelope Spheeris directed *Wayne's World* after *The Decline of Western Civilization* was such a snoozefest.

In general, playing interesting or inspired rock and roll for a living is the best-known worst joke out there. The whole record industry, from major labels down to bedroom cassette operations, is made out of a huge range of opinions, organizations, and tastes that run the show. That's helpful now for people who would have been too ugly, too ahead of their time, or for the kinds of musicians from the "wrong" parts of the country who are too antisocial to be at the right parties in a closed-circuit industry. The modern incarnation of the industry is responsible for sustaining a lot of projects that might not have existed if the musicians had felt the need to "make it" in the traditional sense. Most people used to give up. A lot of the projects picked up now exist without direction, without enthusiasm, but worst of all, without energy. Some rock and rollers like sustain. We like a thin sound to remind us that the herd needs to be thinned from time to time. The age of the rock star died. Whether that's a good thing isn't black and white to us. The modern rock and roll musician doesn't feel the *need* to dedicate themselves to their art. There's no pressure for them to do anything more than to *want* to make music.

Minneapolis is a very bohemian place in a sense. It's easy to work very little or work seasonally and still pay rent, so a lot of people seem to do just that. How does this play out in your lives and your life as a band?

That's all true, but we do try to work hard to be pseudo-intellectuals, at least. We're the bastards of the love affair between hard work and relaxation. The Uranium Club is a club of leisure, built by physical and mental laboring. We don't hold a working class allegiance, though.

What do you have on the horizon?

Obliteration: We have a tour booked for November, where we're headed to the East Coast and back, followed by another one of our strategically scheduled hiatuses.

"A new kind of baby food": After we get back from the coast, we'll record our newest material and put out some records. If you're interested in putting out a record, send a self-addressed envelope to Teen Man's Penthouse.

Globalization: We'll be going on a European tour in April, which we're working on putting together right now. You can bet we'll be making a stop in the Czech Republic.

Uranium Club has a 12" EP out on Fashionable Idiots Records called Human Exploration. *Find them on tour in November:*

11/10: Minneapolis, MN
11/11: Chicago, IL
11/12: Detroit, MI
11/13: Toronto, ON
11/14: Montreal, QC
11/15: Syracuse, NY
11/16: Providence, RI
11/17: New York, NY
11/18: Philadelphia, PA
11/19: Pittsburgh, PA
11/20: Columbus, OH
11/21: Iowa City, IA

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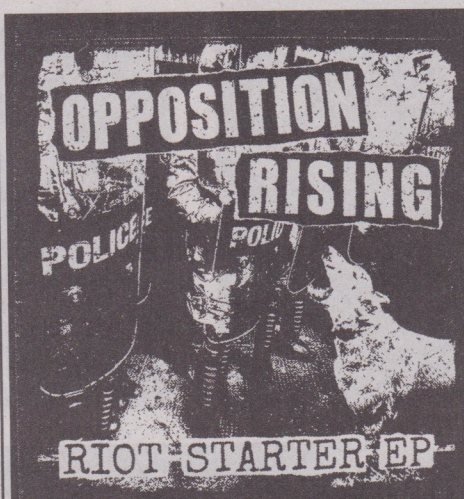

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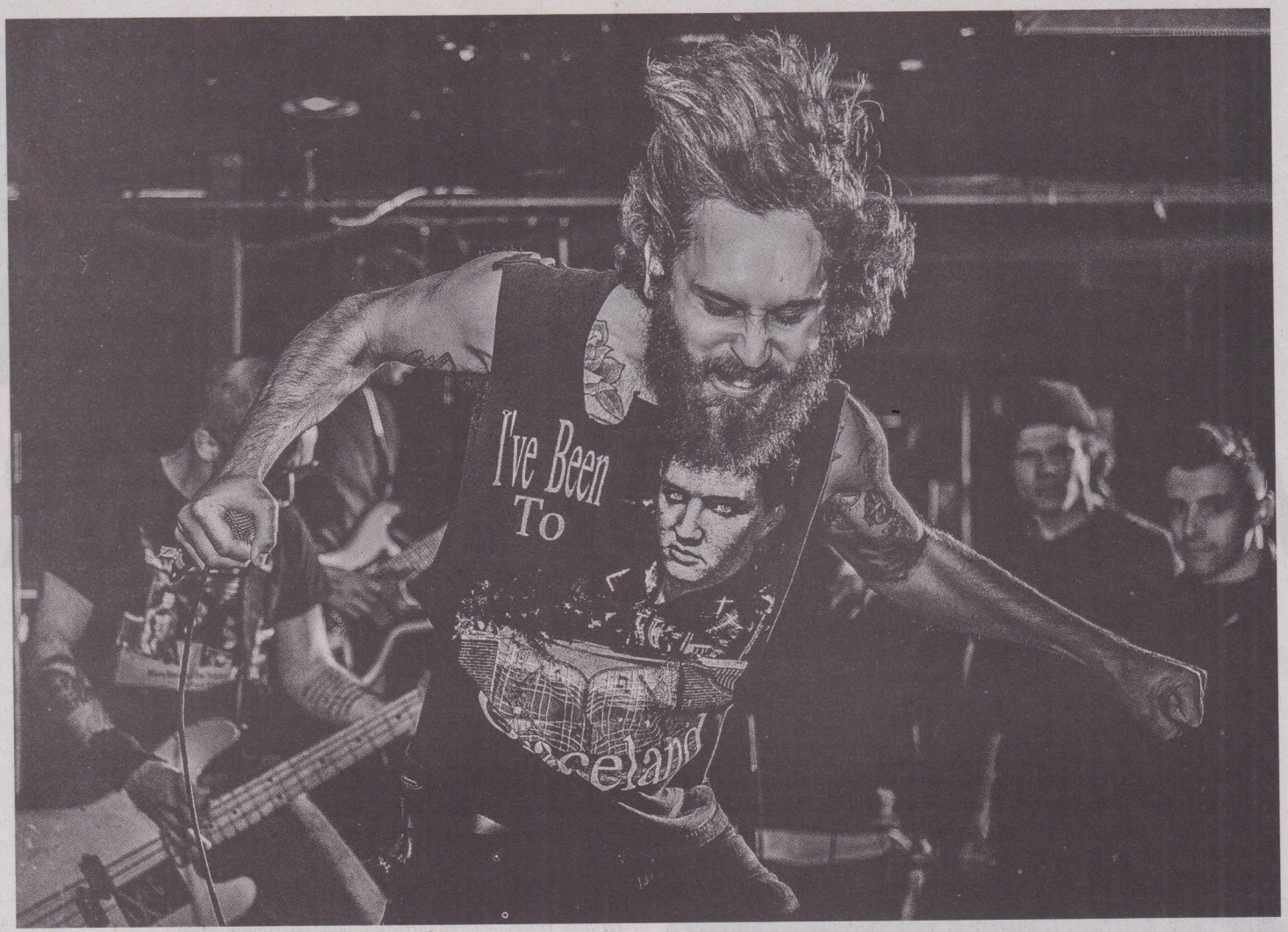
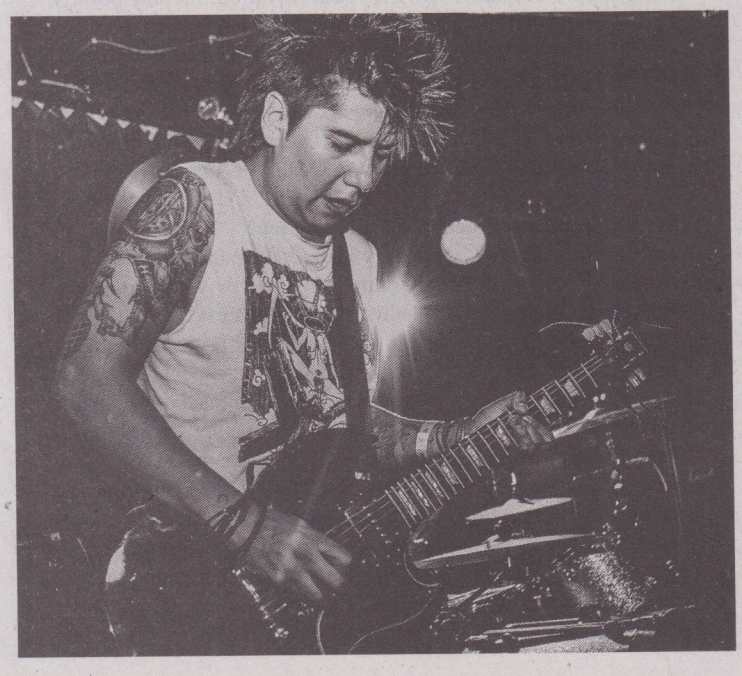


NOT DEAD YET

PHOTOS BY ANGELA OWENS

OCTOBER 22ND THROUGH 25TH 2015 IN TORONTO, ONTARIO

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CAREER SUICIDE, BOSTON STRANGLER, CONCEALED BLADE, ICE, ZOTZ, PROTESTER, LEATHER DADDY, PURE DISGUST.



FIGHT T

AN INTERVIEW WITH TORO

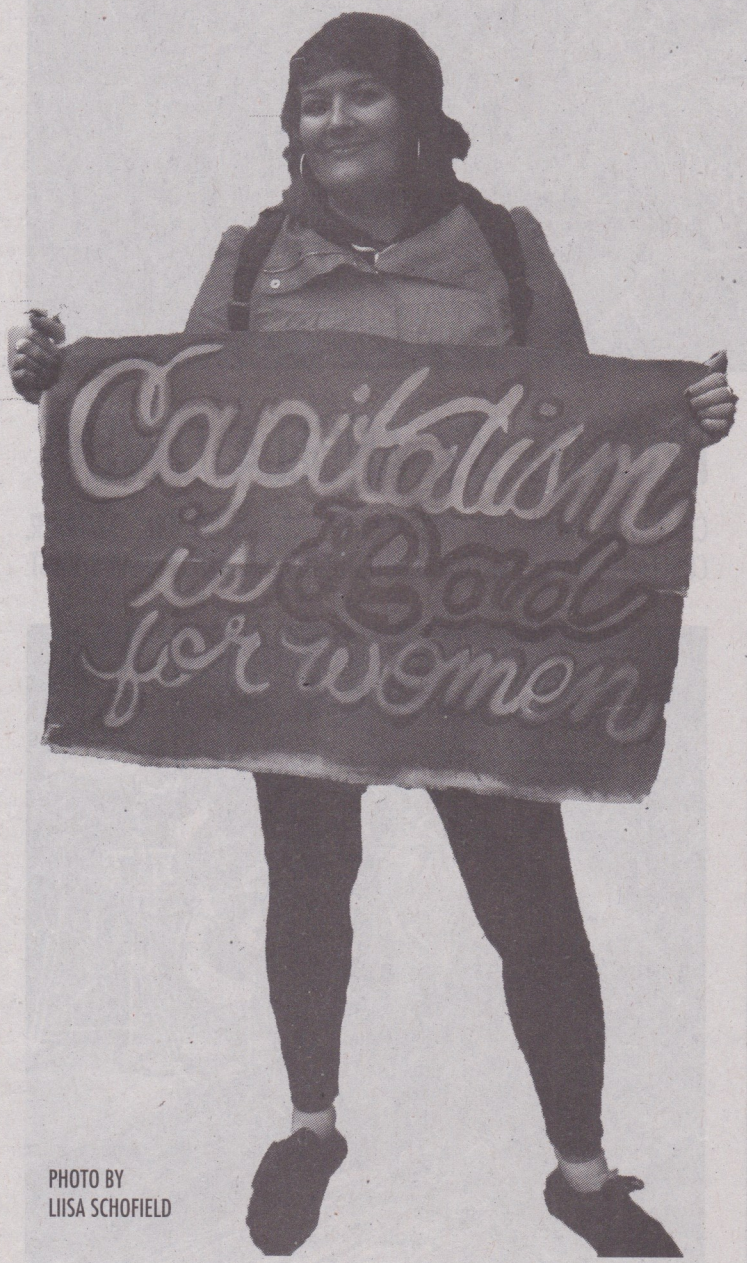


PHOTO BY
LIISA SCHOFIELD

I don't believe in role models and I don't believe that one way is the right way, but I do find inspiration in people who live their lives the way they want to. Here is one such person. Zoë Dodd has been involved in punk and hardcore on various levels for most of her life, mostly in her current home of Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Most interviews in MRR *are with bands, maybe an author or an artist, which I love, but I think you will understand the value of this. I wanted to interview Zoe about her life as a punk which includes music and also her work as an organizer and frontline Hep C worker, housing rights advocate, and a constant force working to end the war on drugs. Not without it's challenges, Zoe speaks openly and without pretension about her journey to where she is now as a survivor, as a frontline worker, as a feminist, as an anarchist, as a band member, as an organizer, as a complex human, and as someone you can easily reach out to for help. Interview and introduction by Mariam Bastani.*

Usually these things start with who are you and what do you do but that's a complicated question.

I'm Zoë Dodd. I have been active in the Toronto hardcore punk scene since I moved here in 1997. Besides that I am involved in organizing around issues like harm reduction, the war on drugs, shelters and housing, HIV, Hepatitis C. I've been involved in anti-poverty, drug user organizing, labor organizing, and anti-police brutality organizing for over a decade. I'm an active member in the Toronto Harm Reduction Workers' Union, AIDS Action Now, Toronto Drug Users Union, the International Network of People Who Use Drugs, the Toronto Harm Reduction Alliance (formerly known as the Safer Crack Use Coalition), and the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty.

What is your primary focus? What is your job?

I work for the Toronto Community Hep C Programs at both South Riverdale and Regent Park Community Health Centers. I help coordinate a program for people living with Hepatitis C who actively use drugs. I'm super interested in healthcare and health and quality of life of people, especially people who use drugs, people who are homeless, people who have been incarcerated. I'm maybe the longest Hep C worker in the province of Ontario.

The community health centers I work in are based primarily in low-income neighborhoods that are going through intensive gentrification. Community health centers are a pretty cool model because they have a myriad of services for people. You don't just go there for primary care. We offer diabetes support, gardening groups, community kitchens, culturally specific programming, tai chi, early parenting classes, a grief and loss program for moms who have lost

TO WIN

ONTO ACTIVIST ZOË DODD

their children, a needle exchange program, early childhood education, physiotherapy, counseling, and healthcare for people without status. We work with marginalized communities, lots of POC, people living in poverty, people who use drugs. I love the model because it is holistic and preventative and supportive.

In Canada we have this fee per service model, which is very expensive, but in the community health center sector we are paid by salaries and hourly so it doesn't eat up a huge amount of our healthcare budget. Within the health center we have an extensive harm reduction program that hires people who use drugs to work and coordinate programs. We have the largest needle exchange in Toronto. We give out millions of needles a year and get them back, almost 100% return rate. And we hand out safer crack use kits and other harm reduction supplies. We have a drug users memorial to remember those we have lost because of the drug war. It's an eight-foot copper flame that we created collectively. That's where I work and I love it.

Would you say that your early experiences in this job influenced you and got you involved in activism beyond work?

I was active with stuff before my job as well. When I moved here there was an anarchist space called Who's Emma and punks were pretty involved in political issues and organizing. The anti-war movement was really big here. It was the second time we invaded Iraq and I would go out to big demonstrations against the conservative government, organizing against the massive cuts to the welfare system and the safer streets act that targeted homeless people. I went to a lot of those but wasn't directly involved in helping organize. I went to huge demonstrations that happened after the WTO in Seattle. And then I got more involved with organizing within my own community as I thought organizing locally was more relevant and maybe more effective than attending the huge global demonstrations, though I think both are still necessary. My work was also informed by my own lived experiences and the experiences of those around me, including those of my friends. So living with lots of people who use drugs and having lost people who died of overdose, having friends living with HIV.

I got into punk when I lived in Edmonton, Alberta and there was huge anti-racist organizing going on. I was exposed to punks against racism who were also fighting white supremacy. There were a lot of white supremacists and Nazis in Edmonton. There would be these full-on battles at shows. For me, it was a very important time. I see some of that today and I wish that punks were involved more in anti-racist organizing. It was an important role that white people played confronting white supremacy in the scene and not leaving it up to Black and brown people to fight on their own. Anti-racist organizing was really important and still is.

When I moved here, the Anti-Racist Action (ARA) was really active. Toronto was home to the Heritage Front and Ernst Zündel, who was this huge Holocaust denier and a recruiter for the Heritage Front. Lots of Nazi skinheads lived here. When the Roma when first came here they were staying in hotels and the Nazis would go to these hotels and attack Roma people. Punks were involved in the ARA organizing and went out there and scared the Nazis off. Fought them and drove them out. Those battles happened all over the city.

We had this brutal conservative government in the province, known as the Harris years. We had massive cuts to housing, the public sector, homelessness and welfare and disability. Lots of brutal cuts, lots of changes in the province where I lived, lots of attacks on people living on welfare, attacks on people living in poverty and I was impacted by that because I was also living in poverty and was impacted by the cuts. That really fueled my interest in being part of community resistance but I was also dealing with my own personal issues that didn't make me feel confident about being more actively involved.

As a young kid I would organize against things and think politically about everything. Acid rain, it was terrible. Nuclear war, I'm so scared. I would always talk politics and about injustice. I was making kids in my school, like grade four, all watch the killing fields and I was like, oh my god, we have to send money to Cambodia or organize something. I was like that as a kid.

But my parents had a really awful split up. My mom ended up doing basically a midnight move with us up to the North. So we lived in the Yukon which is next to Alaska. I was already a punk, already had a lot of friends that lived in Edmonton. We went up there and it was really turbulent. A lot of terrible things happened to me over a short period of time that impacted me in super negative ways that took a long time to undo, unravel, and work through to get to a place where I felt confident about who I was and have dreams and goals. I didn't really have those as an eighteen-year-old. I didn't have dreams and goals in my early twenties. I didn't think much was possible. It was really depressing.

You said you were already a punk and that you were already organizing when you were a kid. Was it a function of being a sensitive kid? You are a tough lady.

I was tough but still a very sensitive kid. I was really lucky that my parents worked in theater and film and so they were different and their friends were all different. When I was a little kid I felt different. I was like, I'm a nerd, I read a lot of books and I love music and politics and facts. I'm nine and I already know who Divine is. I was surrounded by lesbians and gays and trans people. All these queer people. I wasn't sheltered from the LGBT community. I was around all these artists and young single people that my parents were friends with and it had a big influence on me. I had this incredible Uncle Patrick

who was a young guy who was really cool and hitchhiked everywhere, who got deported out of the country. Then we moved to this isolated place. The Yukon is a cool and interesting place, but it didn't have the same opportunities you have living in a city. It's 18,000 people in the very far north next to Alaska and it was a really turbulent, difficult time. I was already different. I was getting more established in who I was and was ripped out of being able to be actively involved in that subculture.

I spent my summers in Edmonton and would get to go to stuff and shows. I had this great friend Sam, who unfortunately died a couple years ago, but she was my best friend in junior high and high school. We used to send each other letters every day. We had this comic strip going that she would draw of us. We did drugs together, we dropped acid for the first time together, snuck into bars at fourteen together. We had a lot of first times together, listening to Metallica "One" on acid, eating Mr. Noodles. Our first date was watching the movie *Deadpool* because we were obsessed with Slash. It was pretty cute. Those early years were pretty transformative and also up and down but she was my most solid friend.

It's always foggy when you're a kid. There are always tendencies that fade away and come back. You are active in the hardcore punk community and community healthcare issues. Do you think those two things informed each other?

I think being a punk totally informed the way I did things. We had this moment in the late '90s, early '00s and it seems to happen in every scene, where some people were just like, "Oh god, everyone is so PC" and then everyone fought each other and people were very divisive. It sucked. People were bullied, especially if you were political. It was horrible. There were a lot of hurt feelings, but it also made me want to do stuff. There were very few women who were active, only a few of us. The scene became really small. People felt pushed out or moved on. It's not like how it is today. There were very few bands and it made me want to be in a band, do punk movie night and make vegan meals for people, made me want to put on shows and organize events and take up space and involve more people and not be pushed out.

Being a Hep C worker I was working with people (and still do) who had no access to healthcare in a system that was and apparently is supposed to be universally accessible, totally left to die because they're somebody who uses drugs. Despite there being a cure for people living with Hep C and despite the fact that 70% of new infections are related to injection drug use. Full-on discrimination. And there is this energy in me to be like, fuck it, I'm gonna do something about it. About people's access, about the lack of information people receive when they are diagnosed, about the fucking problems in the healthcare system for people living with Hep C. So I started a group, a support group for people who use drugs living with Hep C. I had never done a group before, I have a high school education with one year of college but I knew how punk worked and knew that you could just do stuff. You could network and organize, make food for people. People love food and I read *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire and read about popular education. And I was like OK, I'm gonna root this group in popular education. I was really into being an anarchist and anarchism—I still identify as an anarchist—and wanted to use the principles of mutual aid and my own anarchist beliefs in what I was doing.

Do you find that the DIY approach becomes problematic when you start working within the system?

Well, it's a real challenge, but when I got hired I worked with a pretty radical organization started by homeless people called Street Health. They hire a lot of people with lived experience [and] a lot of the workers were involved in the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP). A lot of these people believed that this system that we live and work in is so fucked up, that the issues that cause harm to people are a systems issue. They may not all be anarchists but there were communists and Trotskyites and socialists.

It was really awakening for me. "Oh my god, I can do a job that is actually pretty punk." I could get away with being a radical within a social service organization. One of the first demonstrations I organized was around police cameras being installed in this neighborhood. We successfully won and they were taken down shortly after they went up. I worked (and still work) in what is known as one of poorest neighborhoods in Canada, that's home to the first housing project and the largest men's shelter. We had just released this report around homelessness in the city so we organized against the cameras, highlighting the report and my work was involved in that and supported it. I could go to anti-poverty actions and be a part of them, I could be involved in organizing around drug users' issues and that radicalized me in my job. I took that with me to my next workplace and in that job I started to feel way more confident. I was dealing with personal issues and building this sense of confidence in myself that I had never felt before and I felt I could speak up about things.

That's also where I learned about labor organizing. I helped to organize a union in that workplace at Street Health. Unfortunately, I lost my job there just after the union came in because I got targeted by the employer, but so did twenty other people. I went to work in a better place. They hired me knowing that I'm like this, that I am vocal and I do organizing and that is important to me. They haven't stifled me or tried to stop me. When I am representing my workplace, I represent my workplace and when I'm part of an organization I represent that organization and I try to keep those separate so no one gets mad at me. "What did you do? You got arrested on work time?" I wouldn't do that.

Seems like a lot of punks want to make the world a better place and they start to get involved in organization or education. Punk informs you in a certain way but some times you have to work with the system. Your workplace already had a radical streak in it. But you have had clashes with larger institutions.

I'm apparently banned from all federal health meetings. I cannot go to any healthcare-related meetings with the federal government. I participated in two AIDS conferences where my amazing friend Alex and I helped organize and targeted the Canadian government, primarily the health minister and vandalized the booths that displayed the government at the conferences. Apparently we are now blacklisted [and can't be] anywhere where the federal health minister is. That's fine. I don't care, but those clashes come up and you have to make a decision: How is this going to impact my job? Is this going to impact the people I work with? Is this going to help?

I don't personally think my job should exist. It has to because of the current systems we are forced to live under. I don't think any social service job should exist. Social services are just a way to control the poor and to control groups of people. They can be immediately helpful but long-term they are not solutions…Homelessness shouldn't exist, jobs like these should not exist, but they exist for a purpose. I have always been of the mind that while I'm in this job, I am working my out of this job. You know? I have to work hard to make that happen. One day that could happen because now there are all these cures for Hep C that are shorter. I helped to establish a program that supported people while they were on this really difficult Hep C treatment for a year. Now there is treatment that is only twelve weeks long and totally tolerable for a specific strain of Hep C. The program I work in is community-based and this model is now modeled across the province. It's looked at internationally as a way to deliver community-based care to people living with Hep C. But illness is profitable and we live in a capitalist, profit-driven society that is profiting very largely off people being sick so people don't have access at this time. It's so expensive. The most expensive drugs ever produced: $90,000 USD for a course of treatment. 180 million people are living with Hep C. That's a lot of profit to be made.

I want to believe that people I work with will get cured and we won't need such an extensive program one day and I can go do something else…I don't want to perpetuate these systems of oppression and I know that I'm a part of it being in social services. I think people do really good grassroots and community-based work. I know so many amazing people, punks doing some really amazing work, especially in harm reduction, prison abolition, healthcare, anti-eviction and gentrification organizing, organizing against and addressing sexual violence, anti-

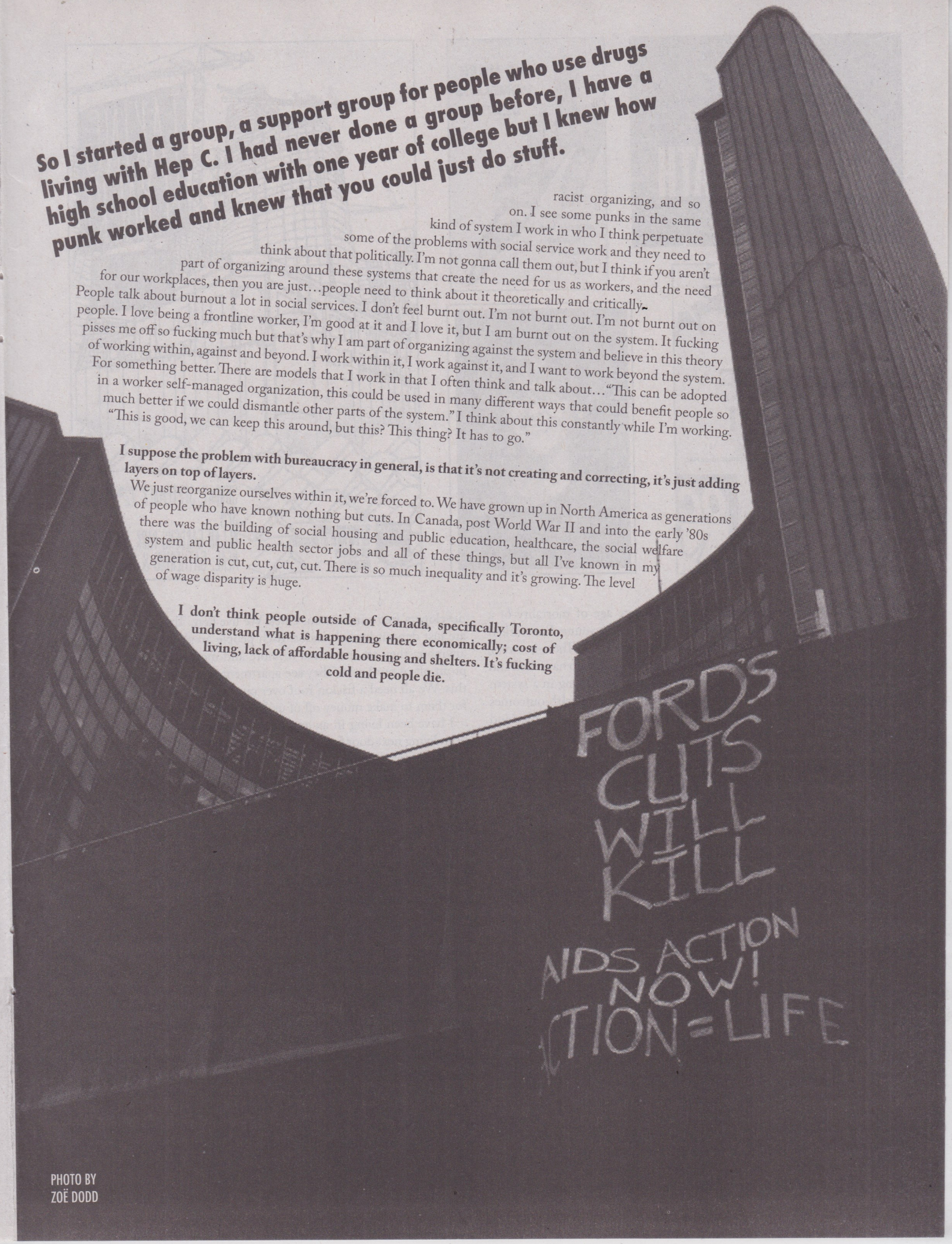
So I started a group, a support group for people who use drugs living with Hep C. I had never done a group before, I have a high school education with one year of college but I knew how punk worked and knew that you could just do stuff.

racist organizing, and so on. I see some punks in the same kind of system I work in who I think perpetuate some of the problems with social service work and they need to think about that politically. I'm not gonna call them out, but I think if you aren't part of organizing around these systems that create the need for us as workers, and the need for our workplaces, then you are just…people need to think about it theoretically and critically. People talk about burnout a lot in social services. I don't feel burnt out. I'm not burnt out. I'm not burnt out on people. I love being a frontline worker, I'm good at it and I love it, but I am burnt out on the system. It fucking pisses me off so fucking much but that's why I am part of organizing against the system and believe in this theory of working within, against and beyond. I work within it, I work against it, and I want to work beyond the system. For something better. There are models that I work in that I often think and talk about…"This can be adopted in a worker self-managed organization, this could be used in many different ways that could benefit people so much better if we could dismantle other parts of the system." I think about this constantly while I'm working. "This is good, we can keep this around, but this? This thing? It has to go."

I suppose the problem with bureaucracy in general, is that it's not creating and correcting, it's just adding layers on top of layers.

We just reorganize ourselves within it, we're forced to. We have grown up in North America as generations of people who have known nothing but cuts. In Canada, post World War II and into the early '80s there was the building of social housing and public education, healthcare, the social welfare system and public health sector jobs and all of these things, but all I've known in my generation is cut, cut, cut, cut. There is so much inequality and it's growing. The level of wage disparity is huge.

I don't think people outside of Canada, specifically Toronto, understand what is happening there economically; cost of living, lack of affordable housing and shelters. It's fucking cold and people die.



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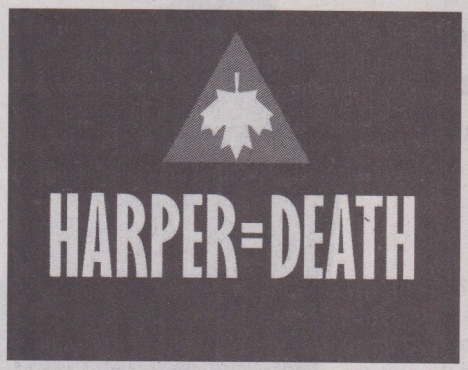
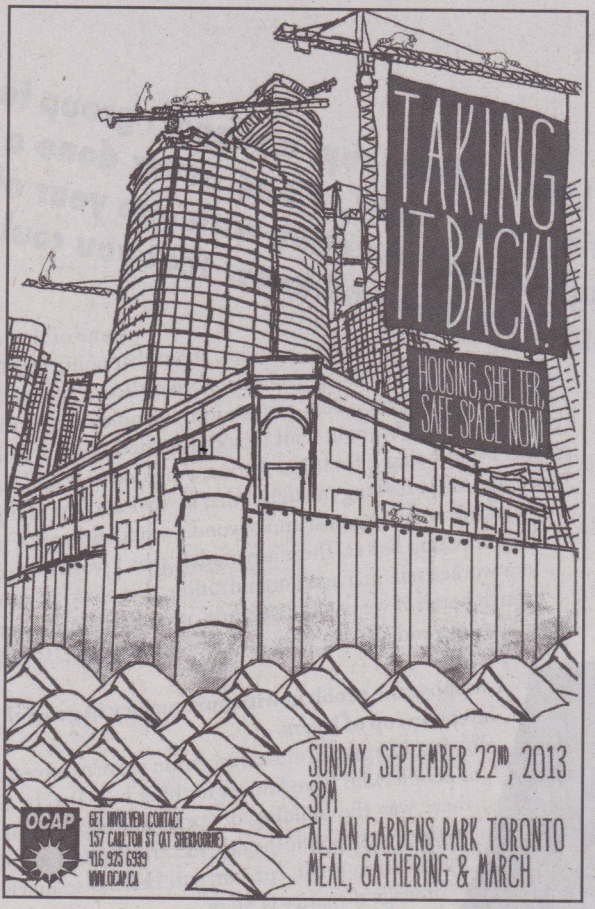
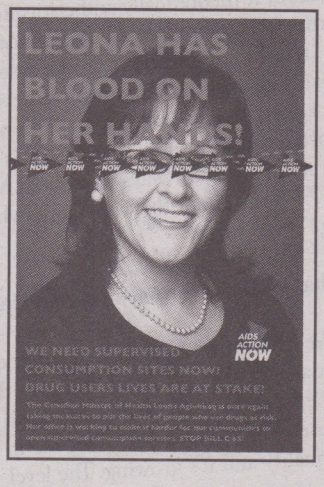






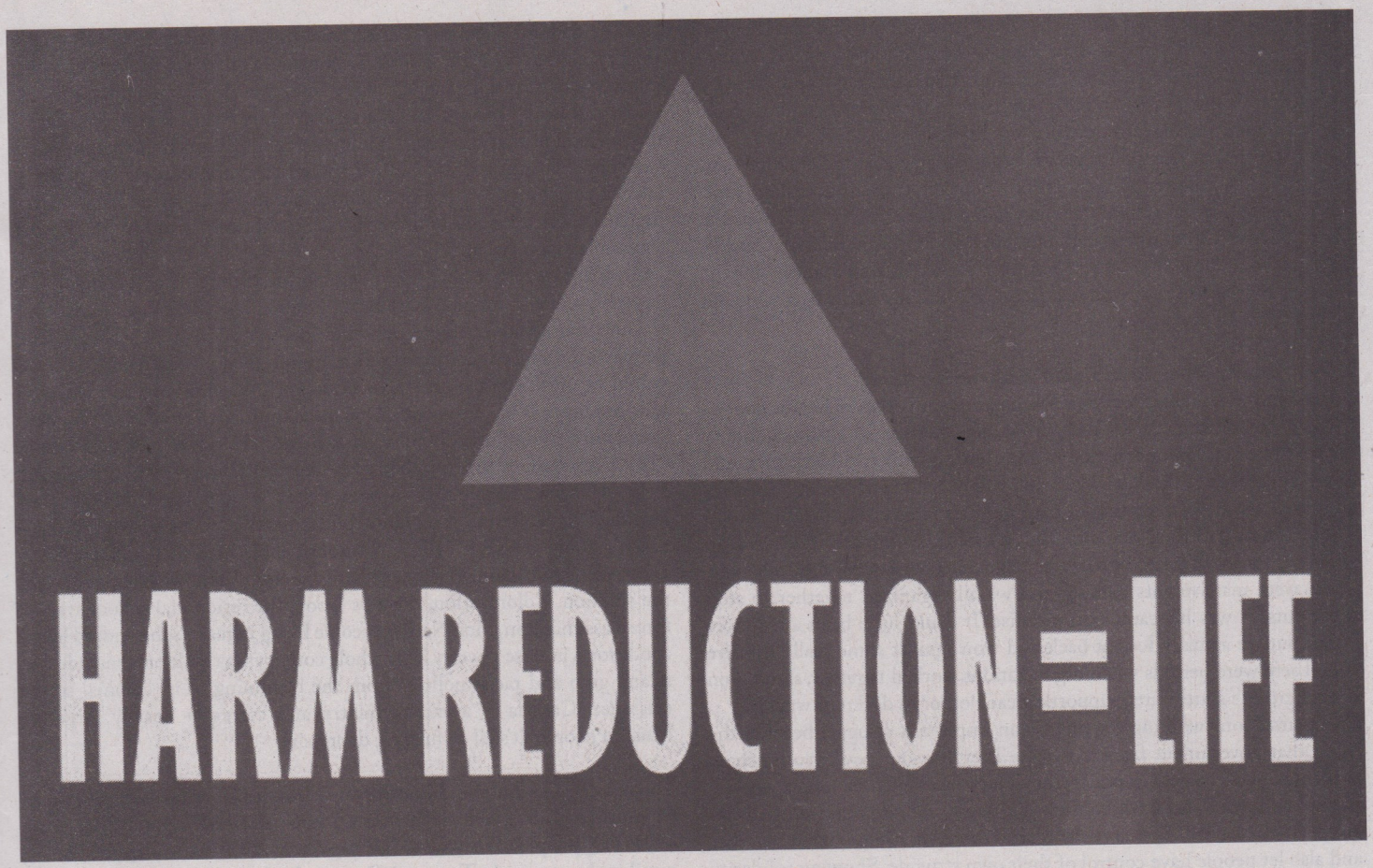
Oh god, no…they don't. People die. The average age of mortality of a homeless woman in this city is 39 years old. People die young. I've worked with so many people who have died. I could name them. There is a very, very long list of people who I have known over the years who have died and they died from poverty. They died from the impacts of living in a system that creates this disgusting inequality and creates poor health outcomes that cause people's early deaths. This is a city that has a lot of money and development going on. We have the most development in all of North America. We have condos going up everywhere that are displacing people from their communities. We have the city engaged in these redevelopment exercises that are just taking the neighborhoods where housing projects have been and making them mixed income, pushing people out of those communities who have lived there forever. Socially and culturally cleansing. The city has bought into this lie of working with developers and they are going to develop affordable housing and it's bullshit. Our city sells us out, the Ontario government has these really weak tenant laws, and so we can get evicted so easily. Rent has gone way up, housing prices have gone up way up. They are escalating all the time.

People don't see it, but it's San Francisco, New York, Toronto…

Yes! And it's becoming out of reach for people and they are struggling with many jobs or as best they can to live here. It also means that our shelters are completely full [and leads to] the closing of homeless shelters. Homelessness has massively increased. We have people dying on the streets and there is no political will to change it. We had to fight for drop-in centers and warming centers. That's one of the times I got arrested. The city of Toronto doesn't have warming centers. In the summer we have cooling centers when their apartments are too hot. Yet we have nowhere to go when people are too cold? So this was part of a campaign to have warming centers open. I got arrested twice with fifty-five other people, and we forced the city to open warming centers, but these are like breadcrumbs. We need to keep people alive with these basic fucking minimums that shouldn't have to be fought for. We are fighting for these when we really need to be fighting for housing and we need to put an end to developers' free rein over our cities. We live here. They need to stop. These are just deposit boxes, condos. Rich people aren't interested in gold bars anymore; they are interested in more and more ways in which they can profit off of our backs. They see apartments and condos as a means to do this. We all need a frickin' roof over our heads so this is a really easy way for them to make money off of us. We are forced to pay rent.

I have been living in an apartment long-term and my neighbors have been living next door for 30 years each and because of the escalating rents, landlords get greedier, they start evicting people because they know they can get more rent. It's happening everywhere. My neighbors and I have been involved in a nine-year battle waged by my landlord because of this. We have been resisting and fighting and winning, together, so we can stay. Now, I have been targeted on my own and have been in a nine-month battle to save my apartment, which has been a social hub for a lot of people in the city and a lot of punks. Lots of bands and punks have stayed here. The place has been designed to host people and put people up. It has been something I have done for fifteen years.

I just officially gave notice on my apartment, after ten years of living here. It takes a toll having to fight every day at my work and then having to fight around my housing. It's really sad. I live in Kensington Market, people fight for businesses here. They don't want any big box stores so they have mobilized against these, but it's also the neighbors and the residents that make where I live what it is, not just the businesses. This is not a neighborhood that I can afford anymore. That is happening to tenants all across the city, pushed out, priced out and moving to neighborhoods they never lived in, maybe feeling isolated. Some of the neighborhoods that have cheaper rent also don't have anything around them, no community centers, and no stores. It can take twenty minutes to walk to a convenience store. It's not good for people, it is isolating. It's sad. It's not just our city; it's Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and London. All the major cities are going through this gentrification at this accelerated pace. These fights are happening but we can't keep up. I just want to drop a banner out my window *[laughs]* "STOP ALL EVICTIONS!"



That coupled with your work must be taxing.
Last year was really challenging. Actually, it has been tough for a while. I have had a tremendous amount of loss, not just at my work but amongst friends. People have died, from overdose and suicide, cancer. It takes a heavy toll on you and in my own involvement in organizing especially when we, the Downtown East Women's Committee with OCAP were organizing around 24 hour drop-ins for women and trans people. We were in the midst of organizing for these drop-ins in response to a homeless women who was raped on the corner of Dundas and Sherbouse and then I got sexually assaulted the night before we were supposed to have this demonstration where I was supposed to speak. I was coming home in a taxi and I was like, "What the fuck, is this really happening?" You're organizing and it's so close to home. It feels like when you are organizing around overdose and harm reduction and your friend ODs and dies. It starts to make a personal impact.

People ask what I'm doing for self-care and I don't know what to tell them. I have punk. That's what I've got, that's my biggest outlet. I feel so connected to the punks in the Toronto punk scene and outside of Toronto. I feel so involved in it. It's part of my family, that and the LGBTQ community. Being part of the queer scene and being part of the Toronto punk and hardcore punk community is an amazing outlet when doing this stuff all the time.

It's all encompassing fight. It all affects these populations as well.
It's true. What troubles me is that punks are less involved in those fights. I don't know if that's happening in every city. In organizing I see fewer and fewer punks and it makes me wonder who is making up the punk scene anymore. Don't get me wrong, I love our scene here. I think it's really inspiring to see the young punks coming up. I love their politics. I love their gender politics and I love how diverse our scene is and how welcoming and cool it is for trans and queer people. When I do see a punk at something, an action, though, I get so excited that they are there and they are doing something too. It's not just yelling it in lyrics, it's like, "We actually do have power to do stuff." Because we do have power, people have power. As cliché as that sounds. Some people are really burdened by the struggle that they live in the day-to-day but there are a lot of people with a lot of privilege who could be organizing and helping in lots of ways in those fights.

What are some good entry points for people to get involved?
I think it's important to organize where you live. Not just these big demonstrations against global capitalism, but also small community-based organizing. I think that's what's really gonna win, in terms of building a stronger unified base. When I was living in Parkdale there were big cuts in the community center and services that I needed to access and then the police budget was going to have a huge hike. I just organized with the people I lived with. We organized a Poor People of Parkdale group, we put up flyers and people came out. We were all people living in poverty organizing together; we weren't part of an organization. I loved it. It didn't last long but I felt it was important. I wanted to learn more about feminism and raise my consciousness around that. I wanted to be part of a feminist group so I helped to start one, meeting in our homes. A feminist reading collective with a bunch of women identified folks, politicizing ourselves. Those are entry points. People can start things themselves and take what they know.

There are a lot of people organizing in Toronto. No One Is Illegal do a lot of fighting around status for people, immigration detention, rights for people without status, rights for immigrants and refugees, don't ask don't tell policies. It's really important work, especially when fifty percent of people in this city are born outside of the country. The laws around immigrating and status have changed a lot. They're more restrictive, more racist. People can be deported easily and we have had the passing of Bill C-51, which will target people of colour and especially Muslim people, target anyone that the government wants to ship out of the country or arrest without ever seeing evidence. Secret trials go on here that have been used to target Muslim men, trials where they never see the evidence against them. They sit in jail without knowing why they are even there. There have been secret trials without their lawyers having any evidence. That kind of stuff goes on.

Those are things people could get involved in organizing against. They can get involved in anti-poverty stuff. There is the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, there is Jane and Finch Coalition Against Poverty, and there are places that people are doing their own stuff in their own neighborhoods. There is Black Lives Matter organizing, Idle No More, Indigenous Land Defenders that need support, people organizing against the pipelines and continued environmental destruction. People organizing against rape. There is organizing around missing and murdered Aboriginal women. There are over 1200 missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada. There is No More Silence. There is sex worker organizing that is going on, fighting laws against sex workers. There are so many fights to get oneself involved in and or support.

Do you think a lot of these organizers band together?

We sometimes organize together. We had this shitty mayor, he was famous because he smoked crack. Aside from that, he was so shady, ignorant, racist. There is a famous picture of him posing with two black men and one of those men is dead. It's like, what was he really involved in? Through all of that there was targeting of communities in a certain neighborhood where people had their doors kicked in and this stuff. It's so messed up what he got away with, but he's a rich white person. White rich man. There were massive cuts coming and we all organized together to stop those cuts. It was his campaign promise. It could have been a lot more brutal but we actually fought back and won against some really massive cuts. There were periods when organizations worked together, signing on to each other's statements, supporting each other in different ways.

Organizations working together is an important struggle because the thing that government fears is people. They fear our power so much so that they invest heavily in police, they invest heavily in prison expansion, they pass horrible laws where they can deport you and end up with no status stuck in a cell. These are the crucial times we need to band together and also let people have control of their own struggle. Showing solidarity is important, not taking up the space, so when you go to a Black Lives Matter demo and you are a white person you are not speaking to the news when the media approaches you. You are supporting and learning and educating and there are ways to do this. People should be constantly learning and checking themselves. Oh, man it's tough, but it's worth it. I am constantly saying to myself, "That was challenging," but I want to be a good person and I want to know. I want to support and understand and fight together but sometimes you have to fight from behind or from a distance cause it isn't your struggle.

I don't think people quite know all of this activity is going on in Canada, good and bad. People just think it's a wonderland of free healthcare. When gay marriage was legalized all over the U.S. it was hilarious to hear people say they wanted to move to Canada to get away from it! *[laughter]*

We've had gay marriage since 2005! Go ahead and move here! People don't know anything about the politics of Canada. We are 35 million people, we just happen to be a very large geographical area. We don't have much political influence on the world scale but we have some. I don't blame Americans for not knowing much about Canada *[laughs]* except that we are the neighbors to the north and we do know a lot about America. It means that people have a misconception that Canada is some sort of socialist state. It's not. In our "universal" healthcare, you can get turned away for all sorts of things. It takes a very long time sometimes to get tests or surgeries. It's a system that is broken that needs to be fixed. Healthcare should be public and accessible by everyone.

And then we have this very conservative regime of government that is racist, white supremacist. It hates everyone who lives here who isn't a white conservative. You have to be rich, not poor. Lots of white poor people often support conservative agendas to their own detriment. People would be surprised to learn how undemocratic some of the passing of bills has been. It has been wild. One after another after another. We have mandatory minimum sentencing for drugs. We never had that before. They passed these things called Omnibus bills, which are very hard to fight. We have a Senate that we do not elect, it's appointed, and they pass laws that we all have to live with. Youth unemployment is 20%. We have this on-going genocide of First Nations people here that still isn't being acknowledged. Acknowledgment isn't enough. Acknowledgement is not the solution. Colonization, the '60s scoop, the residential school system, forced assimilation, First Nations people living in really substandard living conditions, intense poverty. This whole country was built on genocide and a land grab and racist policies from the beginning of its colonial settler existence. Canada is a racist country and currently heavily targeting Muslim people. It's all so fucking depressing

You were saying that the climate of punk has shifted as far as involvement in politics goes. Here in Toronto I have noticed more POC, more GLBTQ people. Do you think punks in Canada are experiencing similar changes as in Toronto? Do you think punks are into it or have you seen any resistance?

I haven't seen any resistance and I think I would be so furious if there was. Oh my god, I think I would just lose it. I haven't seen it, I don't know, maybe it happens in smaller cities. Here in Toronto if people are transphobic or homophobic it wouldn't be tolerated. I hope it's not. It's not a PC thing, you just would not be welcome here. We went through this period when it was really tough, older people are really aware that it happened and we want to be sure that it doesn't happen again. So people work on shit together.

Toronto is in a good place. It's really fun. It's not perfect but I feel really lucky getting to be a part of watching these younger people be involved and do stuff. I'd like to think that some of us older people helped pave some of the way as well. It's exciting. It's the same in my job. I see so much potential. It keeps me excited and driven. I feel a surge of jealousy when I'm like, "How old are you? You're seventeen and

The thing the government fears is people. They fear our power so much that they invest heavily in police...in prison expansion

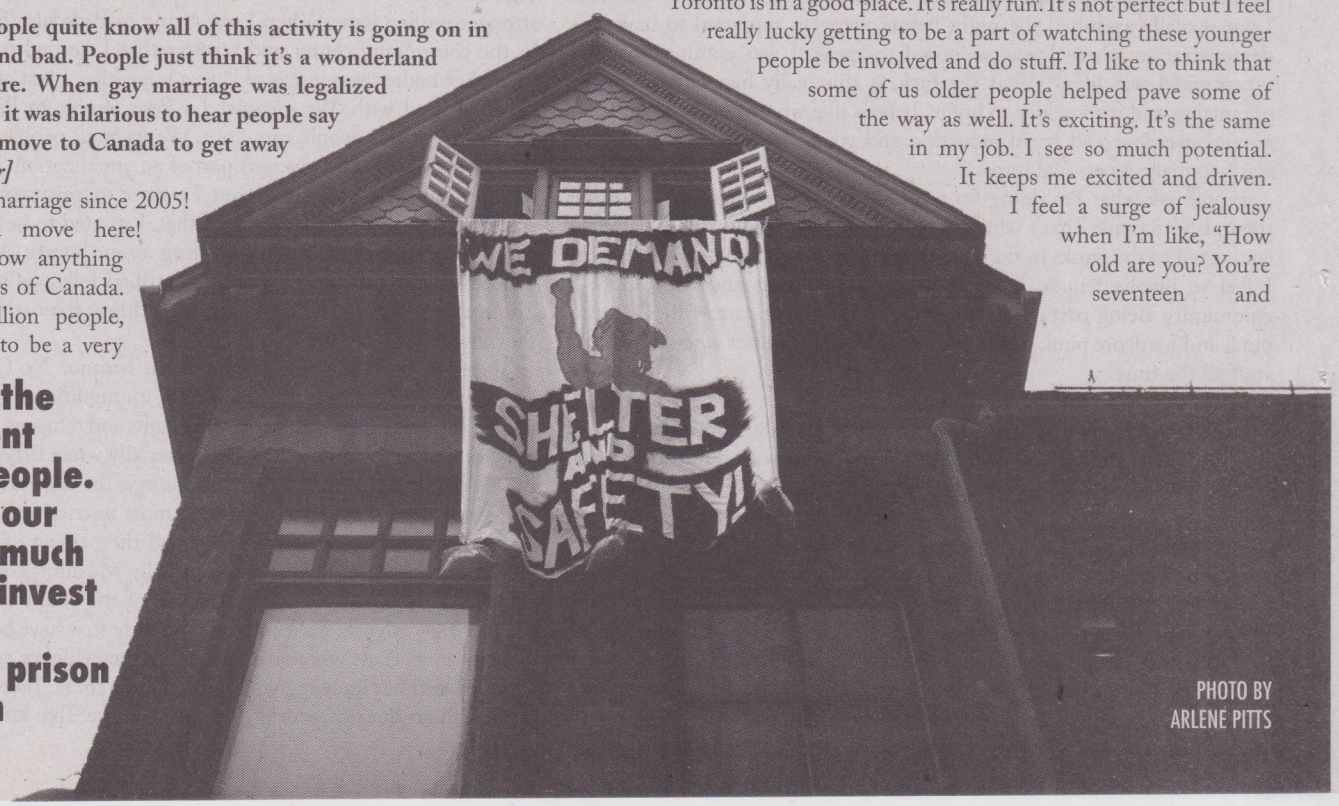


PHOTO BY ARLENE PITTS

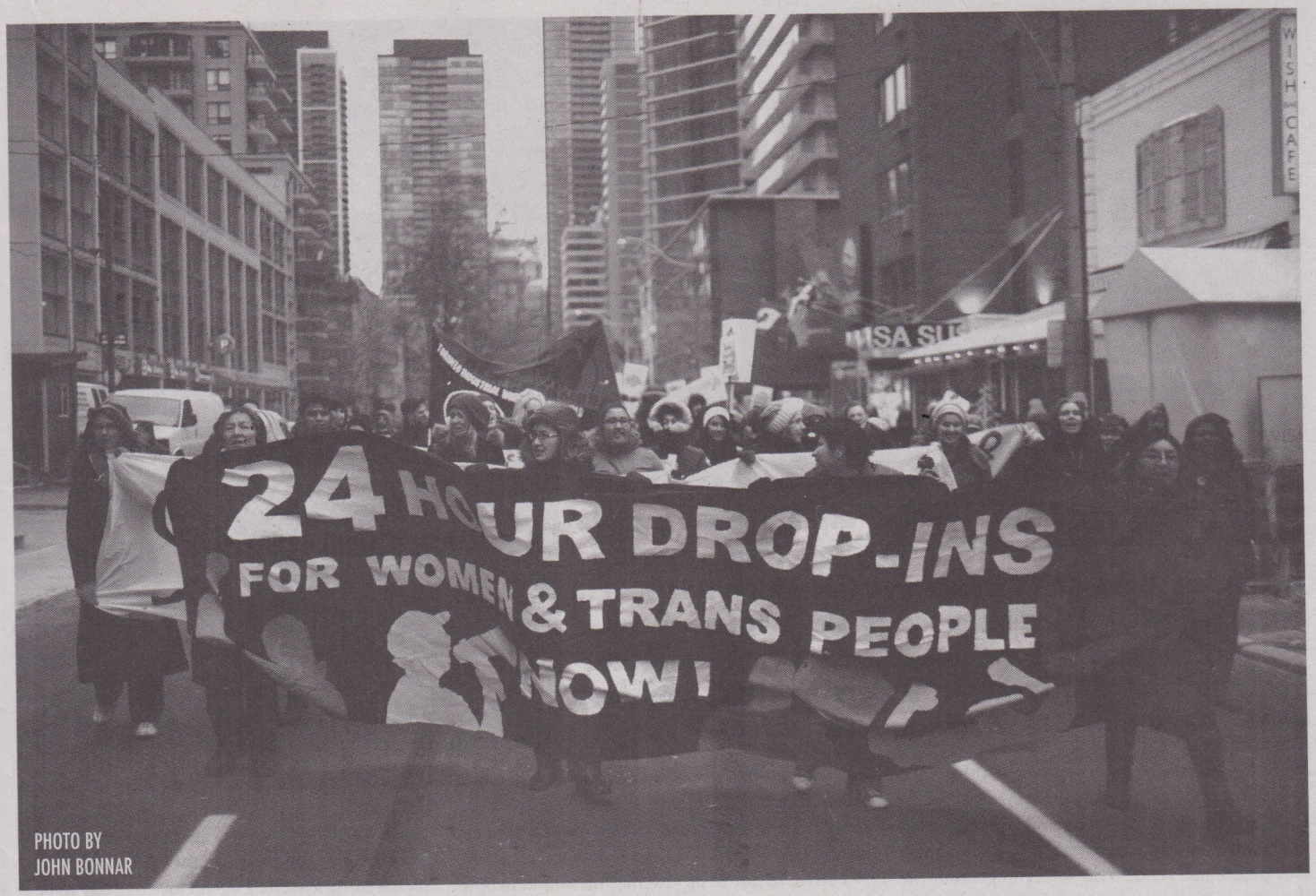


PHOTO BY
JOHN BONNAR

you've already been in two really good bands and you're making a film." Deep down I feel a seed of jealousy because when I was seventeen that was not what my life was like at all. I had to work two jobs to pay rent to try to finish high school. I had to leave an abusive situation with my family. It was a struggle. I think I was 26 or 27 when I did my first band. I've been in three bands. I was in a band called Wreak Havoc, which was kind of crusty and funny. My roommates and I started jamming. My friend Jackson and I sang. That didn't last long. Then I was in a band called Concrete Tank, that was a hardcore band again with my old boyfriend and Mateo who I lived with. That was fun. I was also in the Bayonettes, which I liked doing because everyone was doing a crust band or a hardcore band and we were poppier. I was in that band for a few years. It was really fun and a fun time to be in a band. We put out records and went on tour. I never thought I'd ever do that. I always wanted to just sing. I made so many lifelong friends being in that band. Bonds that are so essential and important to me. Being in bands also gave me a lot of confidence to do public speaking, which is something I do a lot of in my work and advocacy.

You recently just got back from a trip for work, right?

Yes! I went to Thailand. I went to a meeting for three days. Last year I went as an expert in helping to develop guidelines around HIV in key populations with the World Health Organization. That was my first time doing something like that. I couldn't believe I was there, but at the same time being a frontline worker, I actually felt I was a good fit and actually had a lot to lend to the experience. I would go to the meeting that was being held in Geneva and then after go drink in the squatted punk bar near where I was staying. Out of that I was asked to be a part of creating a tool with the UN and the International Network of People Who Use Drugs around HIV and drug user organizing and harm reduction. I helped to write a chapter about community empowerment and on viral hepatitis and went to Thailand to be part of the consultation with 50 drug users who went to talk about and inform the work and other people who do policy, staff with the UN. It was a pretty cool experience. I never thought I would go to an Asian country, I was excited to travel to southeast Asia, very excited to stay in Thailand. I stayed for a holiday for three weeks. My amazing friend Renee who actually convinced me to go to college in the first place and who I am so grateful for met up with me. It was great.

It's been wild. I have a high school diploma and a lot of people that do this kind of stuff have their masters and PhD's. The last couple years I have been published in academic journals around the research I'm involved in at my job. The program I work with is very progressive and is a really great way of treating people living with Hep C, taking it out of specialists' hands and putting into primary care so that everyone can get access so that people aren't turned away. 80% of specialists in Canada didn't want to treat someone with a history of drug use and yet 70% of new infections are related to injection drug use. People want to get rid of Hep C and we want to actually make an effort to eradicate Hep C, so we have to think of these ways that this can actually happen. So, I do sometimes go and talk about my job at international conferences. I like the experience because I really believe in the work I'm doing and that it will translate well as a model in other places. Things are culturally and locally specific so not all things should be cookie cutter or homogeneous, but I do think having primary care and nurses who know how to do Hep C treatment is a good thing. It was really exciting and I hope I get to do more of that kind of work.

I don't want to work for the UN. I want to stay as a frontline worker. The HIV Key Populations was the first time the World Health Organization said we should decriminalize drugs. I'm a huge supporter of legalizing drugs and ending the drug war, which has just wreaked havoc around the world. I think of the on-going war in Mexico, I think about the invasion of Afghanistan and the attack on opium farmers. I think about how much it costs people. It's horrible thinking about the Bali 9 people who were executed. The drug war has been a war on people and I hope it ends in my

Alan Pike photo

I don't have any letters behind my name so I made up I.D.M.J. It means I Do My Job...The system is set up so they don't allow you in without letters... What do need a Masters for to do a referral for a shelter, to speak to people, to do street outreach? You don't need a fucking Masters for that, you just need to be able to know the system and people.

lifetime. I want to be part of ending it. It has been a war especially on people of color and a way for governments to incarcerate people of color. They just destroy people's lives. It's fucking horrible. But then I also want to do something about the drug treatment system, which I fucking hate.

A lot of money being diverted…

Even in treatment and in the US it's billions of dollars of profit for treatment systems that also don't work, that aren't always based in evidence. Operating and taking people's money, thousands of dollars of their money. We could do this better, if we could dismantle capitalism *[laughter]* because I feel like that's the root cause. People are forced to live in conditions and people cope with the conditions they are forced to live in. Drugs aren't all bad. Using drugs isn't all terrible. 10% of people that use drugs have a dependency or have problematic use of drugs, but it's not everybody. Lots of people take drugs recreationally and never have a problem with them, but some people get issues with drugs. I'm into drug user liberation. There is no real place to have an intelligent dialogue about drug use. Harm reduction is so under attack in all places. In Canada you can't even put it into funding models anymore. The stuff that's out there for people who use drugs is terrible, it's hard to get access to information. There are websites that tell you how to use drugs safely. I'm glad these exist. In the punk scene we have had a lot of people die of overdose, people really struggle with their use. It's really challenging for lots of people to have empathy around it. I know it's hard. One of the first people I fell in love with OD'd and died my first week of moving here. Our relationship was struggling because of the way he used. He had lots of things going on that I will never know about. There aren't a lot or resources for people out there besides abstinence and twelve-step which doesn't work for everyone.

I strive to not to be judgmental so that people can come to me and talk to me. I've had punks from all over the world talk to me about their substance use or living with Hep C or HIV. People are really secretive about what's going on. We could do a hell of a lot better at not stigmatizing each other. We need to recognize that people don't know what they're using a lot of times, what's in the cut of their drugs. It's heartbreaking when someone young dies from an overdose. Or when anyone dies of overdose. It's so fucking shitty and sudden. There are a lot of overdose prevention programs in the U.S. The Dope Project is essential to knowing about for overdose prevention. The Harm Reduction Coalition… Everyone should learn overdose prevention.

Sometimes we are stupid in the way we treat drugs. I have been around people where I'm like, "*Oh my god, you have taken so much shit.*" Xanax, coke, Oxys, and all this shit, it's dangerous. We just need to talk with each other a lot more openly. Drugs can be very enjoyable. There is a reason people use them. If they were so terrible then no one would use them, but we do. We need to have honest conversations with each other about how to use things safely. We need to be less discriminatory and there is the hierarchy in use. Someone snorts coke and they find out their friend injects heroin and they are so shitty to the person using heroin. People need to stop that. It makes me angry and sad that people can be so shitty and often those same people drink so fucking much and get so wasted. Somehow that is totally acceptable? The other problem is that people really struggling have such little resources. I am trying to help a friend get help here and they have to wait two more months before they can have another assessment. It's such a shitty system. I would love one day to be a therapist doing psychedelic therapy with people or trauma therapy with MDMA. MDMA helped me so much with my own trauma that I think it would be great. I'll help you with that, don't drink. *[laughter]* In my dreams I would have a drug resource center where people can come, get massages, and if they want to kick, I'll help them kick. I've helped friends go through withdrawal before. You wanna have a bath? Want me to rub your feet? You want some decongestant? Just some kinder ways of helping people out. I'm into that. *[laughter]*

Does the writing you do for these academic journals reflect the radical ideas you have?

Sometimes. I have been running groups for twelve years now. These are groups of people who use drugs and have Hep C and or have HIV living in poverty who have faced discrimination in the healthcare system. I was interested in exploring group cohesion and therapeutic alliance since the group experience has been so transformative for some many people. We did research looking at group cohesion and therapeutic alliance. Along with my coworkers, we wrote a paper on it. It's exciting because I talked about popular education, Paulo Freire, things like mutual aid and it's going to be published in the International Journal of Group Psychotherapy. It's exciting for me to be able to sneak in my ideas and philosophy into that realm and maybe it will inspire somebody to go read Paulo Freire.

My best friend Alex and I got a grant from the Institute for Anarchist Studies to write an anarchist response to HIV and Hep C that we are still working on. I think we should probably just write a book. We are 27 pages in and we are still looking at it, we just need to get it out there. We have plans to put it out and translate it into French and hopefully tour with it to discuss what we think would be a good response.

People have a lot of ideas and we don't put them out enough. We often look to the past, look at people who were great revolutionaries, look at people who wrote incredible books 50 to 100 years ago. There are so many people today that are so inspiring who I am incredibly inspired by all the time. Look at Bree Newsome. Way to climb up that flag pole and tear that fucking flag down. There are so many incredible people in the world, Jennicet Gutiérrez, I was like, right on, fucking heckle him, you know? Show it. Shine a huge spotlight on what is happening in the LGBT community where white middle class people have forgotten about everybody else. That is real. That is so real. It got a lot of attention, it got people talking, and it's exciting. I love reading what other people are writing. All the stuff happening in the U.S., it's so fucked up yet the struggle, the resistance, the rebellion, it's amazing to see the type of local organizing happening, the response to state violence, racism, police brutality...and what people are putting out there. I'm so impressed with people who can shoot off an article and write something. I read so much and every day it burns a fire. I see something changing. All this organizing will feed into something great and maybe it won't happen in our lifetime but it can't stop. We don't have a choice.

You're right, more than ever, we are getting our education from everywhere now and it rules. It's not primarily the academy anymore or just activists of the past. When you started doing this sort of work, were you ever insecure about not having a "formal" education?

Sometimes I feel insecure because I don't love my writing. I think it's a skill that people gain and I also dated someone who insulted me about my writing, it made me feel bad. That didn't help. I felt insecure, but I always knew I was smart. As a young girl it wasn't important to me to be seen as pretty, it was important to me be seen as smart. When I was growing up that was important, get good grades, read a lot, know about the politics of the world. That was so important to me. I'm confronted with myself a lot. I feel very uncomfortable with myself all the time. I'm challenging myself. I'm having dialogues with myself constantly. If I told people the real way I feel about myself sometimes, my friends would be like, "What the fuck are you talking about?" Because I feel conflicted a lot. I get a kick out of being around people who spent all this time in school and for whom being published is such a huge deal and that's not my motivation. I want to get stuff out there, I want people to know about the program I work in, I want things to change I want systems to change for people. I don't want people to die of Hep C anymore. I want harm reduction to be the overarching theme. I want things to be evidence based. If I can contribute to that, it's awesome.

I started speaking at Canadian Psychiatric Association Conferences, I had to put in my credentials to even speak at that conference. I don't have any letters behind my name so I made up I.D.M.J. It means I Do My Job. *[laughter]* It actually got published in the conference guide. I also use it when I put in submissions with my coworkers for published papers. The system is set up so they don't allow you in without letters. Even in social work now, people want you to have a Masters. What do need a Masters for to do a referral for a shelter, to speak to people, to do street outreach? You don't need a fucking Masters for that, you just need to be able to know the system and people.

There is definitely a tension between academic learning and experience. There is formal education that some get and there are other types of education that other people get. I am self-taught in lots of way and that is important. I got that from punk and life. I didn't have all those things when I was fifteen, I realized I wasn't going to University like everybody else. I wasn't going to be leaving my town and doing that. That's not at all what happened to me. When people were dreaming about what they were going to be when they grew up I just wanted to survive for the moment. Then I spent ten years of my life feeling suicidal and very depressed and just trying to live day to day and deal with all the shit that had happened to me. I was traumatized. It's the stuff we don't all talk about, but I think a lot of punks have been through a lot. There is a lot of trauma.

That's what draws people to punk, whether it's the destructive side, the freedom to be yourself, the creative just do it yourself mentality or being straightedge, whatever it is. Punk was a place I could talk about that stuff. I can find other women that have been raped. Sadly, in the punk scene there is too much of that going on and people have too much social capital and get to stick around instead of getting the boot. That was the place where you opened up, where you talked about body image shit through zines you read or that kind of information you got, women singing about it in their bands. That is so inspiring because we have so many secrets that we keep.

I see such a split in punk with politics. Punks will say they have heard it all before when it comes to something like body image, but then they will say that Hep C is a real problem. There are trends in what is worthwhile and what isn't, and what is, is somehow removed from punk.

People just need to be nicer to each other, they need to be kinder and take care of each other. There is a lot of shit that people have gone through that people don't know about and there are things that really upset people and others need to recognize that we have been impacted in different ways. I am not tolerant of rapists and sexual assault. I am not going to be that person that is okay with it. I am not okay with it. I was raped when I was a teenager and it fucked me up. It is something I've had to live with. Right after I was raped was the only time I have been pregnant. A month later I had a miscarriage. Six months later I got raped again because I'm all fucked up and some guy drags me across the room, another punk. Do you tell people? I never told anybody. I kept that all to myself because you don't feel supported in your scene. That's fucked up. People in our communities are dealing with that, it's real and it's happening. People need to be kinder and they need to listen and they also need to deal with it. We spend a lot of time on the rapists and sexual assaulters and less time focusing on the people that have been assaulted. That is something we could do better as a community. How we do that, I don't have the answer. I have thought about this a lot as a survivor. It has impacted me in the most negative ways.

It took me until I was 27 to go to school because I fucking hated myself. I fucking hate the patriarchy. I hate capitalism. I want to see it all dismantled. None of this should be happening to us, but it does. It informs everything. It is why I do the work I do, it is why I ended up using drugs in a problematic way, why I had a problem with alcohol, why I have had shitty relationships, why I never wanted kids, why I have PTSD. That can't be ignored. People in our scene are coming with all of that. It's harder for some, not as hard for others. People are impacted in different ways and its really fucking prevalent. As a community/scene we can be better, figure out ways to deal with our shit.

We have been really bad at some things for sure. It took getting a job to go to therapy because I couldn't afford to go see anybody. I would love to fight for those resources and help create some of those resources, so that people don't feel alone and fucked up and silenced. I'm so inspired by people who could come forward and say something because I didn't. This makes me feel really sad. Those who are brave enough to say something and brave enough to confront it inspire me. I'm angry with those who lash out, don't support people and think it's complicated. It's not fucking complicated as far as I'm concerned, people who do shit like that are traitors. We can be shields for people who are doing these things. Is that the society we want to live in? It happens in the activist scene. There are people in the radical scene who have shields that protect them from people calling them out and have done really fucked up things to people. It's really sad that they think they are radical and they are going to change the world.

It's like one good action absolves them of a terrible action.

Yeah! If you are that person this is not meant for you to be organizing in. I want to be able to trust the people I organize with. I want to feel safe and comfortable. I don't want to spend all

of my energy with the shit that derails people's struggles and organizing. I want this apple banished. I want them to go deal with their shit elsewhere. I want us to be able to focus on the real fight, which is dealing with the systems of oppression. Dismantling it and building everything better. Those people are part of those systems of oppression so why am I fucking organizing with them? Why am I hanging out in a punk scene with them, listening to people sing about being traumatized and I'm standing next to someone's sexual assaulter that I know? I wanna just smash their face. I feel very violent towards them *[laughs]* and I won't lie. A lot of people have suffered and they suffer.

The organizing I have gotten involved with is feminist organizing. This woman was raped in the neighborhood I work in, she is a homeless woman. I thought, "We have power. Us, as women." The police had video images and they weren't doing anything about it. We took the men's images and put thousands of posters up of those guys up in the neighborhood to warn other women. We started a campaign for 24-hour drop-ins for women and trans people so people had a safer space to go to in case something happened. We won. We got money out of the city when they said there was none. A couple million dollars annually. That organizing was so important to me.

You are more at risk when you don't have a home, when you are a vulnerable person. You are way more at risk of some really violent shit happening to you. We owe it to each other to fight together and change this shit. I got arrested with five other women when we occupied an office when this city promised us that we were going to have these drop-ins and they did not care about the lives of these homeless women. We weren't going to stand by and allow that to happen. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the cop that came in to arrest us was really abusive and assaulted myself and Liisa, an organizer from OCAP. It was really violent and scary as they tried to close the blinds so the people outside couldn't see in. That cop was known to OCAP because in the '90s he used to assault sex workers and OCAP had put up thousands of posters of him. That's what I feel like doing to people in the punk scene. I'm gonna put up thousands of posters of your image, so you better watch out. Don't fucking do shit...we should do that shit. There was a guy in this scene that did some fucked up shit to one of our girlfriends and we were like, "We are gonna banish you, you won't be able to go to shows, we are gonna make your life hell when we see you." If people don't like that, I don't fucking care because I don't like what he did to her and I don't like what he did to other women.

Do you see parallels in how punks take on larger issues? That it's easier to face "other" issues rather than look at the ones happening within?

It's really challenging to be betrayed by people you care about. It's hard when someone you know did something fucked up and they are your friend. It's complicated when you know them. It's easier when it's an outsider, a stranger. I think that's what happens, but we aren't doing anyone any good when we aren't dealing with it properly, we are just perpetuating it. Then we aren't keeping it safe for others. I've seen that. I've seen somebody that I did a show for, I didn't know that they had sexually assaulted someone. If I had known I would have been like, "Fuck you, not doing the show." It wasn't until they got on stage that they started talking about that they had been called out in Winnipeg the night before by the woman he had sexually assaulted with her friends and now he was in Toronto talking about it. I heard years later that he had done it again. Of course he did! What did they do in the meantime? They just reinvent themselves, they are still around and they haven't worked on their shit. That's fucked.

There are accountability processes that people try with predators. I don't think they work so great and honestly people put so much energy into them. It's really challenging and that's where the energy goes while this who have been affected are left to the side. They are maybe given a list of places to go to, but those places are full. After I got sexually assaulted during the organizing for the 24-hour drop-ins, I felt bonkers. I was disassociating, having flashbacks, having to deal with something I did not want to deal with at all. I had taken women's boxing, I had done Wen-Do, I had taken Kung Fu, I had honestly thought, if anything like this ever happened to me again, I would smash their face. I've been in so many fights, I thought I could smash their face in, but I didn't. I shut down like lots of people do. It's just...it's...it's fucking so shitty.

When I was accessing resources there was nothing that I could access. Everything was full. We have one rape crisis center in Toronto, it is volunteer-run and there is no funding for it. When it comes to things for women it's super underfunded. Women and trans people are overlooked. There isn't anything. Therapy costs money and when you try to get into a free program, they are full. During this time I was thinking about how I have to deal with my shit and how I could start a group for survivors where we can talk about the systems of oppression that create this and that this is patriarchy. How can we talk about this in a critical way? It was a great idea, but I needed to do it later when I was better. I had to pay for therapy and was angry about that. I wish I knew the cab driver who assaulted me so I could tell him he had to pay for my therapy for the next six months. I was fucking sober when it happened. I had so much shame on myself.

But...for the first time in my life I was super public about it. I fucking told everybody and told myself that I was gonna talk about it. I just say it, because it makes it easier for me and I'm sick of being quiet about my experience as a survivor. When you do talk about it suddenly everyone around you starts to share their experiences. The floodgates open. People talk about experience that they feel may have been sexual assault. People could really school themselves on what consent is. It doesn't mean that things can't be fun. Things can still be fun, but you need to be cool. *[laughs]* You can't take advantage of people. We need to be healthier with each other. Punks could live by example with each other instead of feeling at odds with

We have so many secrets that we keep.

PHOTO BY
KATE MUNN

each other. We can ask, what is it that we want? What kind of world do we want to emulate? When I think about myself and what I want to be, I am just striving to be a good person. I want to be good to people and try my hardest and best. We can do that. Punks are critical, we are outsiders. Punks have that capability to do that with each other and be better. We can recognize and be critical about what is going on around us. No more fucking bullshit. I don't want to hear about Skrewdriver anymore or your sketchy industrial band that you're ok with. That's enough. Grow up. You have a role to play in dismantling white supremacy, let's get on it. Let's start actually doing some shit and still have fun. It doesn't have to be shitty or PC, or whatever people want to call it but we can't ignore what's happening around the world or to folks we know or are around and are demanding shit of us to not do or do.

Your work is definitely part of how you do this on an individual level. This seems suited for some, but not all.

I didn't know I was going to go into social work/healthcare at all. I was just in a shitty relationship with someone and my friend Renee was here. She was going to go to school and I thought maybe I should go to school too. I didn't even have my own bank account, her and I went to get me my own bank account. When she went to school I said fuck it, I'm gonna go to school. I took this community worker program. I completely fell into everything.

I don't like social workers so much all the time. They can be very patronizing and controlling of the poor and people living in poverty. They are arms of the systems that really fuck people over, whether that's the welfare worker or the probation officer. There are a lot of people that go in with good intentions who end up working in jobs where they don't have control or power to do the good things they wanted to do. I have welfare workers and children aid workers who are so cool and solid, but they are one in a hundred. People need to think critically about why they are in it. If you are in Vancouver working at the safe injection site are you also involved in supporting drug users in their liberation? Are you also involved in anti-poverty work? Are you involved in anti-gentrification of the downtown eastside? Or is it a cool job?

Some of these jobs are very sexy in this way, harm reduction is the in thing and drug policy is cool, but it's not cool. These are people's lives.

People need to think about the intention. Not everyone needs to be involved in activism. I am a single person without kids, so I have the ability to put my time into other things, but it is important to constantly have a critical analysis about whet we are doing. I don't stop. There is always a thing.

I'm involved with the Toronto Harm Reduction Workers Union, which I helped establish. We just formed our own union. I'm a Wobbly, I'm in the IWW, I believe in workers organizing themselves. Everything I believe I try to emulate and be a part of. Those who can do that and have time to do that should try. It would be good. I'm always excited to talk to people about what they are involved in or want to do or want to be involved in. I love to talk to people about how to get involved in things. I know others are like this. When I was on holidays in San Francisco last year I couldn't stop myself. I wanted to know what was happening with the anti-eviction organizing. I went to a couple actions. It was inspiring to see people organizing in their communities and there are ways for people to get involved in that. We are all affected by the systems we live in. Capitalism, the patriarchy. It doesn't matter if you grew up white middle class, you are still impacted. But you also benefit. There are so many ways to be involved. There is so much great writing on the internet right now. You can exponentially raise your political consciousness level in an afternoon.

I'm excited to talk about this. I feel very loved and supported living here. Not just in Toronto, but all over the place. I feel connected to people across the world and they are connected to me. I am in love with all of my friends and I feel well supported by people. That is what community is about. We just have to take good care of each other. I feel taken care of and I take care of people. We support each other in so many ways. I believe in mutual aid. That is revolutionary to me. If I see you at a show and you want to talk about any of this, please feel free to talk to me. If anyone reading this ever wants to talk to someone who is not going to judge them, I'll talk to them and put them in touch with people and resources near them anywhere in the world, especially anything to do with Hep C and HIV and substance use, harm reduction. Email me dangersigns75@gmail.com, facebook me, I am always open. And fight to win.

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READING LIST:

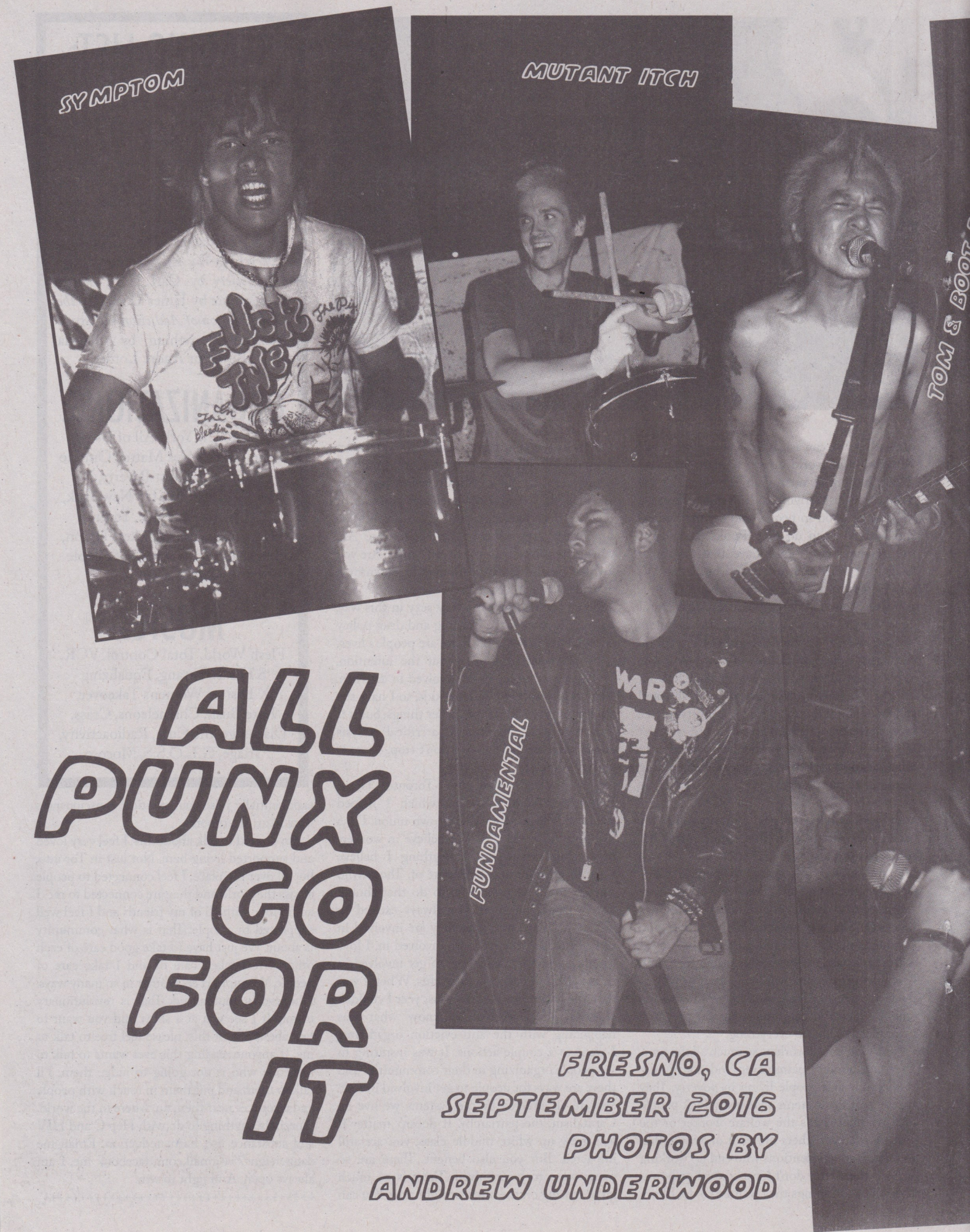
Drug War Capitalism by Dawn Paley, *Resistance Behind Bars Vol. I and II* by Victoria Law, *From Witches to Crack Moms: Women, Drug Law, and Policy* by Susan Boyd (contact Zoe for a full PDF), *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander, *High Price: A Neuroscientist's Journey of Self-Discovery That Challenges Everything You Know About Drugs and Society* by Carl Hart, *Seeing Like a State* by James C. Scott, *The Globalization of Addiction* by Bruce Alexander, anything by Octavia Butler or Audre Lorde

ORGANIZATIONS:

Vocal New York, All of Us or None, Black Lives Matter, Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, No One Is Illegal, Act Up New York, AIDS Action Now!, Toronto Harm Reduction Workers Union, International Network of People Who Use Drugs

MUSIC:

Flesh World, Total Control, VCR, S.H.I.T., Farang, Equalizing X Distort Women's Takeover, Kate Bush, Chameleons, Crass, Discharge, the Cure, Radioactivity, Triage, G.L.O.S.S, Mocoso



ALL PUNX GO FOR IT

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BASTARD NOISE "THE PROGRESSION OF SICKNESS" 10"
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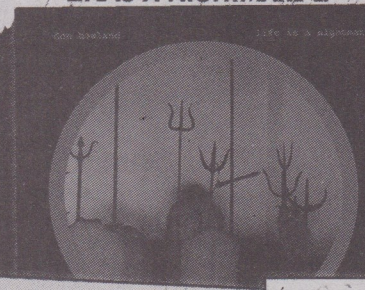

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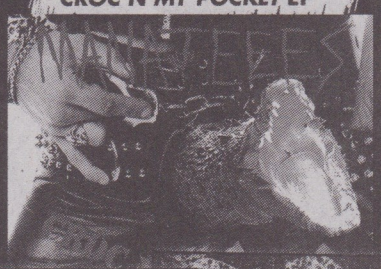
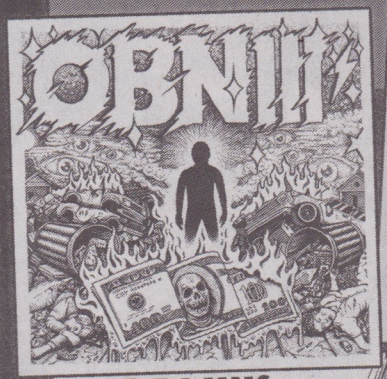
CROC N MY POCKET LP





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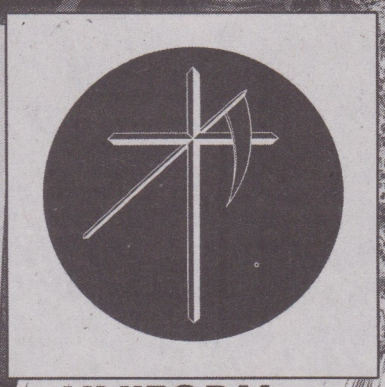

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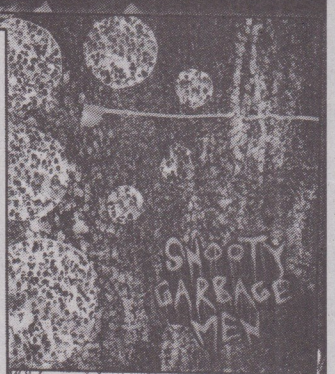

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I've been knowin' this guy for about fifteen years. We met outside a NOLA bar called the Saint after it just opened. He called me out for wearing a Motörhead t-shirt, pointing to his Orgasmatron tattoo, just next to his tattoo of Elvis in Kiss makeup, "Elvis" written in the Kiss font. Since then, I've seen him play in a million bands, played with him in a band, toured with his bands, collected records by his many bands and the bands he put out, had him put out records by my bands, and listened to our favorite bands together.

He moved out of New Orleans just two weeks before Katrina and I haven't lived near him since. As he once said in reference to his label, life, and the lives of his friends, "That bitch Katrina has done put the fuck over on me in too many ways!" Through email correspondence, on the tenth anniversary of that shitty event, I caught up with him about some of what he's been doing since then. He's been called Authentic Metal Face, Cjihad, and Captain Beyonce, and while his friends know him as Chad, the rest of the world knows him as Gary Wrong.

Interview and introduction by Sambeaux. Photos provided by Alison Green and DC Young.

Ok, so where did Gary Wrong come from? I don't mean "outer space" or "the swamp" or some Zolar X type shit.
Basically, I didn't like the band name Wizzard Sleeve anymore and I wanted something that I could do more with, like play songs from past bands/collaborations without them being like cover songs. The name came from a drunken heart-to-heart between me and Benny Divine. I said "Gary Wrong" for some reason and asked him to remember it because I knew I never would. I didn't, but he did.

Wizzard Sleeve has come to David Sedaris' attention and he is planning on (or at least has no qualms about) stealing your now-discarded band name. Lots of non-musical types like to come up with band names for their imagined bands. If you were to title your collection of essays and memoirs, what would you use?
Polarized Fields of Shit!!!

I'll look for it on Feral House. The Gary Wrong Group has seen a revolving cast of musicians with you as the only constant. I know I've seen at least three lineups. The "staff" seems like it's whoever is available to tour at the time or what city you're in.
The band morphed into me and Benny only for quite a while—he replaced three people! Downsizing at its finest. Oil was really high per barrel at that time. The "staff" has gone through many changes, for sure, but there are no hard feelings with anyone on that. No one has ever been axed, anyone can rejoin at any time. There have been up to seven people live! The current lineup is me, Weird Steve, sometimes Quintron, Josh P., and Carly G. and Phil from Vatican Dagger.

I remember seeing Roman Gabriel Todd playing bass at Gonerfest one year. He was pulling more faces than Timmy Vulgar, more metal-looking than Timmy though...Does the term "weird punk" make your hair bristle?
Ha! Yes, Todd makes great faces. He played bass in Wizzard Sleeve and Vatican Dagger (briefly) and drums in Gary Wrong Group. He also quit both bands via a text on a bus ride from Orlando back to Mobile. Mobile, Alabama is where I call home most of the time but I still work and sleep in New Orleans quite a bit. Weird punk doesn't really bother me much these days. If fact, I don't hear that term tossed around all that often anymore.

Somebody made a Gary Wrong guitar effect pedal. What does it sound like?
It's named after the song "Dream Smasher" and made in New Orleans by Octophonics Pedals. It's a delay/booster pedal with a big knob on the side so you can foot control it. I helped design it and abuse it.

By design, you mean pick the colors?
Hahaha...yeah! I worked with Octophonics (Mark Casamore) on what I wanted it to do/sound like and the graphics. He did all the hard parts!

And would it be too far-fetched to assume you do not use this pedal when you play with Vatican Dagger?
You would be dead wrong in assuming I do not use that pedal in Vatican Dagger! I use it constantly! We just recorded a couple of weeks ago. It is a "live" recording and there isn't one moment that the pedal isn't on. It's basically two pedals in one and I use the booster feature heavily.

Being a licensed electrician probably helps you navigates circuits, but after a hard day of crawling under people's houses in the 9th Ward, dodging cat turds, used syringes, and brown recluses, the last thing you want to do is solder a transistor in place. But the point is, *you* could do this stuff if you didn't have a day job, a kid, and a Mobile to NOLA commute. Your schedule has a lot of flexibility though, if you can afford not to work.
Well, being an electrician helps me understand it a bit more than the average person but electrical work is quite a bit different than electronics. I am not the person you would call to repair your noisemakers. However, if you need your home/business/warehouse/squat rewired I'm your man! And "afford not to work"? I've never heard that phrase before!

I meant if you saved up enough money, your electrician's schedule is flexible, ya dumbass. Do you expect to concentrate on Vatican Dagger more than Gary Wrong at this point? Or split the time pretty evenly?
Yeah, I do have a flexible schedule in that sense I guess. Time is equally spent between both bands depending on who has what pending. I just sent off the new recordings by Vat Dag to be mastered by Dave Rahn, so that will be rolling along soon. I also sent him the recordings by Western Mass nutsos Urochromes and Wizzard Sleeve. Gonna release the Vatican Dagger 12", Wizzard Sleeve / Urochromes live at WFMU split 12", and repress of the True Sons of Thunder LP at same time

You're not Catholic. Are there any Catholics in the band?
No one in Vatican Dagger is Catholic or religious at all. The name came from me and Roman Gabriel Todd (who has since quit) wanting to start a new band and starting with that name. Can't remember if he came up with it or me, but it stems from a Thomas Paine quote: "The Vatican is a dagger in the heart of Italy".

Could one of you please change your punk name to Thomas Pain?
[Gary completely ignores this stupid question.]

Would a Vatican Commando wield a Vatican Dagger? Or would the Pope pierce your heart with it?
The Pope would gingerly slice Jesus with it on his Second Coming during some kinky back room Vatican sexual encounter.

The current pope—what's up with that guy? At least cooler than the previous Nazi Pope, huh?
Yeah, sure. It's pretty hard to not be cooler than a Nazi.

What else is going on in NOLA and Mobile of note? If cool bands come through who else do they play with, or are y'all it?
Mystic Inane is definitely my favorite thing going at the moment. There are tons of great bands kicking around in New Orleans for sure but not so much in Mobile on the punk front. Hibachi Stranglers are still at it and always slay, maybe they will finally finish their LP. It's been dubbed *Hibachi Democracy* by locals...that's a Guns N' Roses reference for you too-punk-to-get-the-joke types! It's going on five years in the making. Naked Intruder have thrown in the towel (Deke quit) but have retooled and changed the name to Future Hate, I believe. They were/are the punkest thing going in Mobile but I have yet to see the new lineup.

You've had a lot of collaborators. Your most impressive (as far as I'm concerned) was probably your four-year-old daughter, Orb. I know all about how hard it is to collaborate with someone under the age of ten and I'm impressed—there's a lot of ego going on there. Do you have any plans to collaborate with her again? What are her main influences?
Playing music with my daughter is one of my favorite things to do. She doesn't like to jam as much as I do yet, but we do from time to time. She has constant access to instruments: guitars, synths, amps, pretty much everywhere around the house. She has a full drum kit set up in her playroom and is the only kid in the world with a Drum Buddy (Quintronics handmade drum machine/synthesizer)! As for her influences, she is a Ramones and Joan Jett freak, of course. She loves Bruce Haack, Brian Eno, Flipper, the Kinks, New Orleans soul and funk, Fleetwood Mac, Dead Moon and the Gories, to name a few.

Your Jeth-Row releases have largely been either Southern or non-American. Is there an unofficial policy? Are the international bands friends from touring or bands you've seen on their American tours, or did they seek you out with demo material?
I like pumping stuff from my area but it isn't something that is necessary. I just released the debut EP by Chicago's Ufux. Urochromes are from Western Mass. They are hot, hot, hot. I love them so much! Lumpy Records is releasing their debut EP. As for the non-American bands, Tumor Warlord (Denmark) are people I have met and played with over the years from their past U.S. tours with previous bands (Cola Freaks, Jay Reatard Band, etc). Gentlemen (Australia) sent me the tracks that ended up as the Jeth-Row EP. I was stoked on them so we did it.

In addition to contemporary bands, you have started to reissue seminal Southern punk and hardcore. Last year you did the Sluts's *12" of Sluts* LP and this year, the Toxin III 7", both of which were totally legit. Do you think the interest wasn't there from labels outside the South or were you just fortunate enough to be able to contact Dee and Chris?
I have known Dee Slut for many, many years and have asked him to let me reissue it so many times but he used to drink a lot and either always forgot or just blew me off. He quit drinking (or at least cut way back) a couple of years ago and me and Paul Artigues asked again and he accepted. Paul plays drums in Die Rotzz who also back Dee up as Die Sluts, so that was helpful. Paul co-released the record with me—his label is called Race Records. His first release was the Die Rotzz *Black and Blue* LP and his second was the Sluts reissue with me.

I hit up Chris Cart from Toxin III about doing the reissue about six or seven months ago. He said that Munster was in line to do it but had been sleeping on it for a very long time. I promised him that I would do it legit as hell and I played the southern

Photo: Alison Green

card and blew the New Orleans horn. He didn't really give a shit about any of that but wanted it done immediately, so I did. It was reissued on the 33 1/3 year anniversary of the original release, which just happen to fall at the same time as the Confederate flag hubbub.

I saw the Sluts at Horrible Fest some years back. Die Rotzz was backing up Dee and he was going nuts. Running out of the club onto the sidewalk. He lives in the swamp, right? Abe Manateee was telling me that he went and hung out with him and Dee still has his demo tracks for his Black Flag audition, basically him singing with Black Flag backing him up. That would be a sick bootleg but also a sure legal headache from Mr Ginn. I'm probably violating a gag order by even mentioning it here.

Dee doesn't have demos of that stuff. He thought he did, but he doesn't. And it wasn't demos anyway, it's live, and *I have it*, ha! It's two songs from a show in Pittsburgh: "Clocked In" and "Damaged." There are other recordings that I think have finally been located but they are from the Sluts only, not Black Flag. There are plans to release this stuff at some point as well. Dave definitely lives in the swamp, a lil' town south of New Orleans called Laffite, named after the pirate Jean Laffite!

The subsequent ban on the sales of depictions of the Confederate flag on eBay has at least had the positive side effect of keeping anybody from flipping the Toxin III 7" in auction. Bad news for your e-shop on Amazon. Have any of your typical distributors been so silly?

First off, I hate Amazon and I did not know that BigCartel was owned by them. Is this the case? If so I am deleting that thing, pronto. I rarely use it anyway. I sell records through the occasional advert in *MRR* and other good mags, emails, in person, at shows, distros, stores. I may have sold two or three records total through that BigCartel store.

Big Cartel is not owned by Amazon, I was poking fun at independent merchants selling through Amazon. As far as a free service goes, it beats maintaining a website that you have to pay to register. Even if you sell one record through it it's probably "worth it." So direct ordering is the best way to get your stuff other than requesting it through your local record stores. I guess it's not that hard to find shit on the Internet nowadays.

You opened a Jeth-Row Records store in Mobile and that lasted all of a day—what happened with that?

Pheeeew. Nice to know BigCartel isn't owned by Amazon. You had me sweating for a minute. As for the actual brick and mortar Jeth-Row Records, I had a very small but successful record booth in an indoor "flea market" for well over a year in downtown Mobile. The ownership of the business changed hands and I was asked/begged to move upstairs to a much larger space because of the foot traffic my tiny booth brought in. I was leery about the expansion from the get-go because of the condition of the building, the rise in rent, the time and money involved in stocking the larger space and the time and money involved in the build out of the new space, but I decided to go for it.

Me and the new owner constantly butted heads as well—she made a lot of promises and reneged on most of them. She also treated me like a high school boyfriend and I ain't got time for that shit. Anyway, I almost pulled the plug before even opening but I had an "expansion party" scheduled and wanted to have some fun. So we did! Opened for one evening, drank a bunch of beer. Black Abba slayed the space and Vatican Dagger blew the roof off. The next day the new lady was a total jerk to me so I shook her hand and told her to piss off. I sold a bunch of records which I never saw a dime from because the new owner kept

Photo: DC Young

every bit of it. I know I'm not the easiest person to work with but I do what I say and work very hard at what I do. She really fucked up. I could have helped keep her in business because I doubt she will make it through the year. It isn't like I didn't know what I was doing or at least have a good idea. Hell, I had a semi successful record store in New Orleans pre-Katrina. Oh well, good riddance.

Rave Up did the Shit Dogs (Baton Rouge) comp and the Shellshock (NOLA) LP (with liner notes by our buddy Bobby from *Paranoize*, the longest-running NOLA music zine), as well as a Toxin III LP comp some years back. Prank put out that Knockabouts (Huntsville) 7" fifteen-plus years back. Do you have any other reissues from the tri-state area planned? What Dixie classics would you jump on given the chance?

I would love to reissue the all-but-impossible to find Zoomers *From the Planet Moon* EP from 1981, DIY-styled weirdness from Baton Rouge. I have tried to contact the Zoomer several times to no avail. Chuck Warner released two CD-Rs of material on his Hyped to Death label. One contains the previously mentioned EP and twelve other tracks spanning '79 to '82, and a second one contains less weird and more indie/alternative/college rock stuff from '84 to '88, called the *Mike's Apartment Demos*.

I would also like to reissue the Vomit Spots's *Nina Haagen Dazs* EP from 1987. It has been comped on a Vomit Spots 12" that includes most of their material that came out about five years ago. I'd like to do a reissue of just the EP as it was originally. I'm not sure how many people outside of the Gulf Coast area would be stoked on it though. There are many things I would like to do but my time and funds are pretty limited, so I have to try and be somewhat smart about it. I plan on reissuing the Kajun SS releases on one 12" next year some time, too. That would include remasters of the one-sided 12", the Die Slaughterhaus single, the *Jazz Legends* EP and possibly some unreleased tracks.

At one point, you sent me a tie-dyed Jeth-Row t-shirt featuring the label's logo, your drawing of a redneck in an electric chair, stylized after the Death Row Records black dude in an electric chair. I've been approached on the streets by a Black youth and told my t-shirt was "tight." What kind of reactions have you had from people, Black, white or otherwise?

The original logo was drawn by my buddy Ben Cheesbro when we were in high school or shortly after. That is when I came up with the dumb label name. It was included on my first "release" which was a Minions cassette, my old band with the great Brian Turd (RIP) who was gunned down in the streets of New Orleans while walking his dog. Later on, the logo was revamped by Keenan Keller who is a comic guy (*The Humans*) and has done quite a bit of artwork for me. Most people dig it or just think it is really dumb. I think it's great because it takes the Black man out and inserts white scum in a forced-death scenario. I have been asked several times by postal workers if I have caught any flak from Death Row records about it and, also asked several times, if I was worried about Suge Knight hanging me over a balcony by my ankles!

A great man once wrote: "I must be a real dumb fucker, because I'm from the South. You can't believe the shit that comes out of my mouth..." What's wrong with the South? What's wrong with the rest of America?

Nothing, it's perfect...Well, except for the white people, the Black people, the religion, the heat, the mosquitos, and the oil companies fucking up the Gulf Coast. The rest of America has its collective head up its prolapsed ass.

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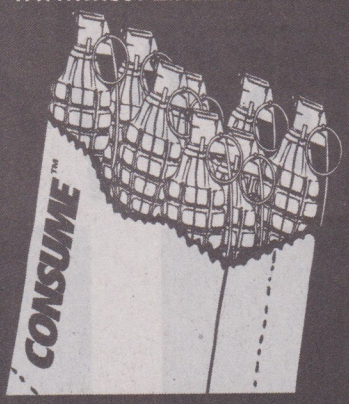

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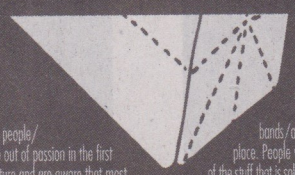

We like to meet people/ bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

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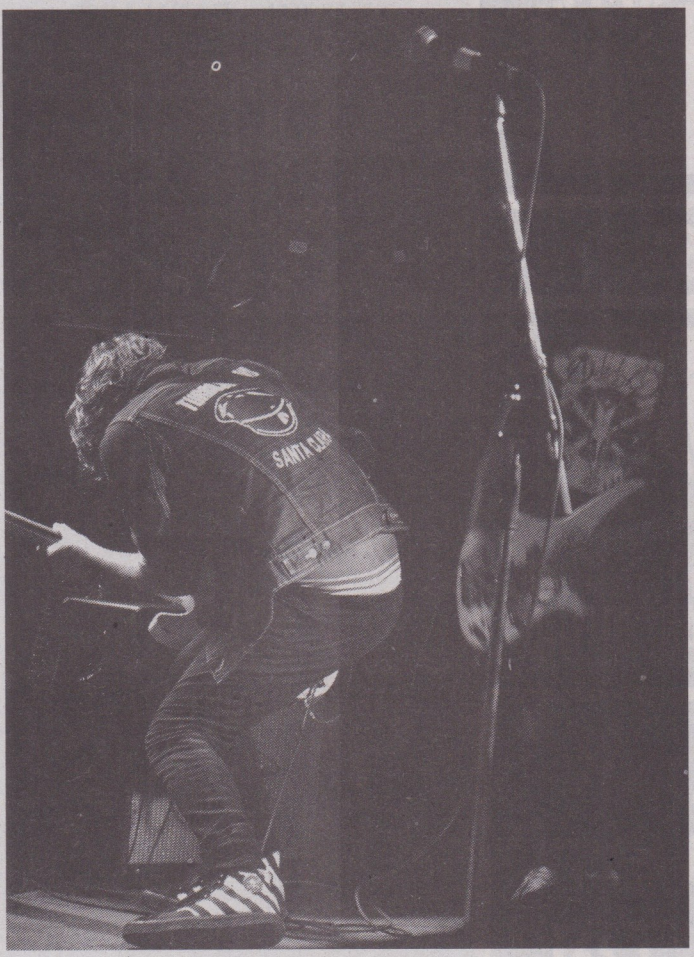
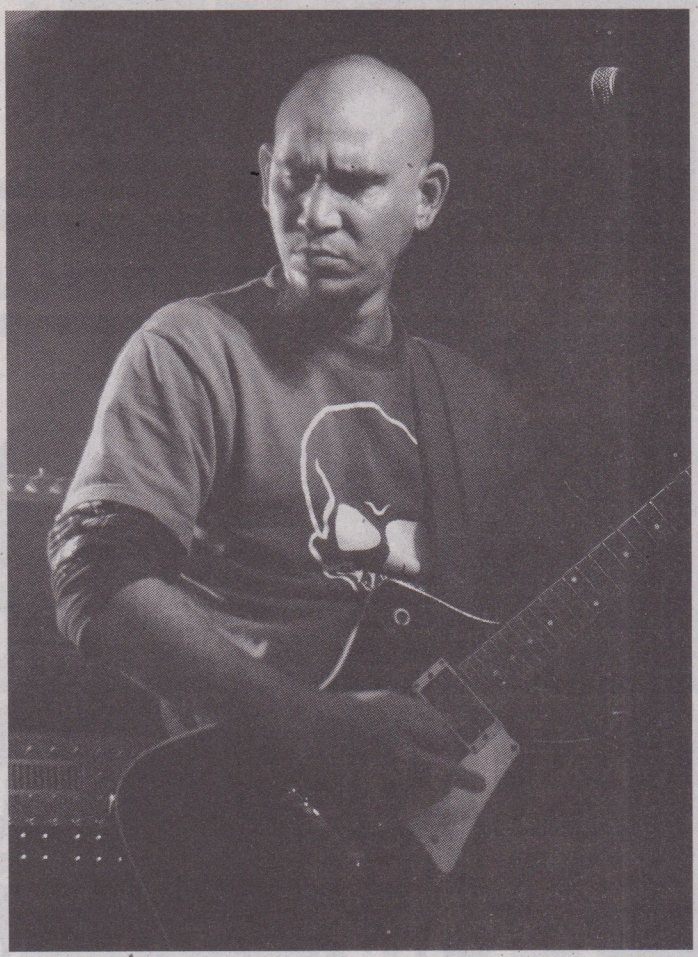




LEFT: ADICTOX; RIGHT: ARRABIO

This interview was conducted at the Varning From Montreal Fest IX Punk Picnic on September 26, 2015 with members of two Cuban bands on tour together in Canada. Thanks to Adictox and Arrabio for the great conversation, Drew for his work with Solidarity Rock, Dave for coordinating, Will for help with the interview, and Janick for bringing together bands from all over.

Interview and translation by Lena Tahmassian. Photos provided by Samuel Reina Calvo and Drew McIntosh.

Daimel: bassist of Arrabio
Rasillo: drummer of Arrabio
Yoyo: guitarist of Adictox
Landy: bassist of Adictox
Pollo: singer/guitarist of Adictox

MRR: Tell us a little bit about your cities and some band history. You're from different cities, right?
Daimel: Trinidad is a completely touristic city. We used to be called Stress, but later we changed our name to Arrabio and switched from a more pop punk rock sound to a more hardcore and metal style.

Trinidad used to have a really limited rock movement; there were about ten to fifteen people who listened to rock and there were no bands from there. We all had this dream of starting a band one day. Somehow we managed to do it. Stress was the first rock'n'roll band to come out of Trinidad. We expected to be rejected, but people were actually into it, we got to play in different places and this created the foundation for what would come later.
Pollo: Adictox, we're from Santa Clara. I have to say, after coming to Canada my concept of "city" has changed. Santa Clara is not a city, it's a village! *[laughter]* Before Adictox, Ricky, the drummer, and I played in another punk band called Eskoria and Landy played in a hardcore band called Feedback. Eskoria was the foundation for punk in Cuba. This band doesn't exist anymore, the singer died… well, he was killed. So when he died we had to keep going with a new project. We got Yoyo who hadn't played in bands before.

We've always played in this place called Mejunje, which I think is the best spot to play. Playing here in Canada, everything is great and we love it, we get to play out of amps we've never seen before, but also we miss Mejunje, even if the sound is bad.

MRR: How did you discover punk in Cuba?
Daimel: I discovered punk in the late '80s when I heard a band from the Basque Country called Eskorbuto. *[laughter]*

MRR: I think I've heard of them.
Daimel: Then other Spanish punk started to appear, and then later there started to be hardcore, stuff like Sick of it All. Those were my first encounters with punk.
Rasillo: In the year 2000, I got into metal, the stuff you could hear in Cuba—Pantera, Sepultura, Slayer—that's where I started. Then I got into punk in Santa Clara. It was hard not to be into punk there because there is a really strong scene,

thanks to Eskoria. Whoever was into rock was also into punk, it was impossible to separate the two. In Santa Clara since there are so few places to play, everyone just plays together: rock, punk, metal. We don't have the luxury of being able to separate these things. The scene here [in Canada] is really different than in Cuba. Over there we have a different culture, other idiosyncrasies, and different needs.
Pollo: Yeah, but on the contrary, I think it's a gift to have everyone working together like that.

MRR: Are there other important cities for punk?
Daimel: Sancti Spíritus, Cienfuegos.
Pollo: Yeah, the middle of the island. Those places plus Trinidad and Santa Clara.

MRR: And Havana?
Rasillo: Yeah, there is a big rock scene there, being a capital city and all, but these other places are better for playing.
Pollo: Yeah the bands that don't come from Havana are more sincere. We've never gotten paid for playing because the clubs are forbidden from paying bands. We carry all the instruments and drums over, since we don't have cars or anything. In Havana things are different, they are more like professional rock and metal bands. They discriminate against punk. The first Cuban punk bands were actually from Havana, but they don't exist anymore, that was in the early '90s.

MRR: What were they called?
Pollo: BH, Rotura, Detenidos.

MRR: I wanted to mention that in terms of US cities and towns, sometimes we also don't have the luxury of really separating the subgenres of rock and punk, depending on if you come from a place with a strong underground tradition or not. I suppose the main difference I perceive between punk and metal in the US is that punk traditionally has a more DIY philosophy at its core, and metal bands not so much.
Pollo: Right, in Cuba though, DIY is not an option we choose, it's a necessity. Things just have to be that way.
Daimel: In Cuba punk and metal are in the same boat and have the same purpose.
Pollo: A lot of metal bands have punk lyrics really, protest lyrics.
Daimel: About the streets, society. Not so much about demons and the Antichrist. *[laughter]* It's more down to earth and in touch with reality, about the current social reality in Cuba.
Rasillo: In Havana there are some bands that talk about that stuff; vampires, demons.

MRR: They aspire to be rich and famous?
Rasillo: Yeah, exactly, which in Cuba is really a false expectation, because that's never going to happen. *[laughter]*
Daimel: Yeah, they wear all black, leather jackets and stuff when it's 95 degrees out. *[laughter]*

MRR: Is rock (punk, metal) marginalized in Cuba? Is it repressed?
Pollo: Yeah, we are the freaks and the freaks are always marginalized.
Rasillo: Anything that is outside the system that the government establishes is marginalized. Punk, rock, gay, Jehovah's Witness. Anything that is outside the official concepts of "the Revolution."
Daimel: Times have changed though. Back in the day there was brutal repression. If you had long hair, they'd shave you. But it's not like that anymore.
Pollo: In the '60s in Cuba there were camps called UMAP (Military Units to Aid Production). That's where they sent all the gays, lesbians. You know Silvio Rodriguez the singer? They sent him there too. All the Jehovah's Witness and anyone living outside the system. They sent them there to work. It was brutal.
Rasillo: Nowadays the government doesn't repress.
Pollo: Yeah, they just ignore.
Daimel: Ignore the movement, ignore the people.
Yoyo: They don't promote or help.
Pollo: Unfortunately, in Cuba absolutely everything is under the watchful eye of the government. So if they don't support you, it makes your life much, much harder.

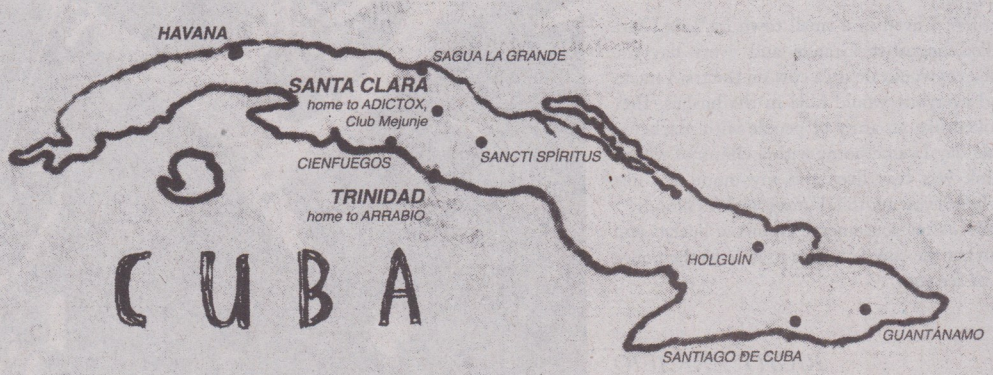
MRR: Do the punk and queer scenes intersect?
All: Yes.

Pollo: [Landy and I] work in the aforementioned club called Mejunje. The name comes from the name of an herbal tea blend. We call it that because of the mix of people you can find there. We work in the theater there as stagehands. That's the place that has always opened its door for us and I think it's the most revolutionary place in Cuba. *Actually* revolutionary because in the '90s when AIDS entered the country, nobody wanted anything to do with infected people, but Mejunje opened its doors to them and to gays, "freaks," trans people. When I say "freaks" I mean punks and metalheads. Mejunje is about to celebrate its 30th anniversary.
Daimel: It's an inclusive place
Pollo: It's an example of what society could be like, where everyone accepts each other. At the punk and rock shows you see trans people. I think *MRR* has written about this topic before, about Juana Candela.

MRR: Can you tell us a little more about how Eskoria started?
Pollo: Eskoria has had a lot of members through the years, I was lucky to be included in that, but really it's William's thing, he was the singer and the leader. He's the one who got killed in a fight; he died in 2010. Eskoria started in 1994, which were really rough times, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, which generated a huge crisis. A lot of Cubans fled to the US by sea at that time, or died trying. And William, I don't know how he did it. He was really brave to start a band at that time.

First off, because he was singing about anarchy, this was really brave to do in Cuba at that time. Secondly, obtaining instruments was incredibly difficult. These days all the instruments we have are thanks to Solidarity Rock, otherwise we'd only have instruments from the Soviet days. I don't know how William and the other guys were that courageous, to play punk at that time. Everyone in Santa Clara knows who they are because it was such a big deal that they were doing that music at that time.
Daimel: When I met William he was in a sanatorium. You know, the government sent all the people who had AIDS to these sanatoriums, where they gave you food, there was television, etc. Later on down the line when they figured out that people with AIDS weren't actually contagious, they let them go.
Rasillo: At the time, people didn't know what AIDS was.
Daimel: Back then in the '90s, people would inject themselves with HIV in order to go live in the sanatoriums, because at home they were starving. They assumed there would be a cure, so they infected themselves to improve their living conditions for the time being.
Pollo: At the time, in order to get out of the sanatorium for a bit you had to request a pass. Then a nurse would accompany you everywhere to make sure you weren't having contact with people. If you were to go to a café, they would give you water then throw the glass away, or scrub it with a lot of bleach…
Daimel: There was a lot of discrimination.
Pollo: And the only place that opened its doors at the time was Mejunje.
Daimel: At the time it was really hard to play music, but in the sanatoriums you could play, there was access to instruments. I remember when William was starting Eskoria, they were giving him boxes of cigars. At the time cigars were very expensive, but the sanatorium patients would get them for free, so they would sell the cigars and buy instruments.

MRR: Switching gears—The Communist Party is the sole governing party in Cuba, but is there any room for other parties?
Pollo: You know what, in Cuba there is a law that says that there can only be one political party. It's pretty crazy to think that in one country everyone is supposed to share the same political beliefs. So yeah, it's a dictatorship.
Rasillo: There's no law, it's just that the Cuban Constitution says explicitly that there is only one party. There are some ways in which you could start another party, but it's really complicated, basically impossible. Cuba has a totalitarian party that controls everything.



Pollo: To start a new party you need money and no one has any money in Cuba.
Rasillo: There is no political freedom. The Communist Party is the only one that will exist until the system changes.

MRR: So the only options are outside of official politics, to open cultural spaces, like you guys are doing.
Pollo: Yeah or escape to the United States, which is also really difficult. On the other hand, Cuba has some good things. We have healthcare and free education, which are important. But in general, things aren't really working. We're tired of it.

MRR: What kinds of jobs do you have?
Landry: [Pollo and I] work in the theater at Mejunje. There are many theater groups coming through from other towns, we do the lighting. That's my official government job. I also have my own business and between the two I can survive..
Daimel: I also work in a theater company, but in Trinidad. I also work as a curator in cultural centers, the ones that exist in every province. I help curate art events: music, theater, visual arts, poetry.
Rasillo: I have the same job as Daimel, but in Santa Clara.
Yoyo: I'm unemployed at the moment. But I work with computers so it's easy for me to find work.
Pollo: You know there are two currencies in Cuba?

MRR: Yeah, tell us about the economy
Pollo: There is the national peso and the convertible peso, referred to as CUC.
Rasillo: Until 1992 it was illegal to possess US dollars in Cuba, you could go to prison. In '92 they changed the law to allow them in, but in 1994 they took dollars out of circulation and introduced the CUC. So tourists use CUC, but we need them too, in order to meet our needs and buy things. However, the government pays us in the national peso, which is totally devalued compared to the CUC.
Pollo: One CUC is worth 25 national pesos. In one month we earn maybe 12 CUC (equivalent to about $12)...

MRR: But when you go to do your grocery shopping...
Pollo: We are issued a notebook with our list of essentials we can get: rice, beans, salt, sugar, oil (bad oil, not olive oil), soy bits (also poor quality), eggs. That's for each month...and also chicken.
Rasillo: I guess we live on an island, but getting fish is incredibly difficult. So instead of fish they give us chicken. That's what the government provides at a subsidized price. But the food they give us is not enough for one month. Nobody can live off of that. Then soap, shampoo etc., you need to buy that with CUC and its really expensive for us.
Pollo: Everyone just steals mainly. Everyone. A good job in Cuba is one where you can rip off the state. *[laughter]*
Rasillo: Cubans are very carnivorous because it's really hard to live off of vegetables like people do here. In Cuba it would be very expensive, but meat is cheaper and easier to obtain especially on the black market. Beef is very expensive, though. It's illegal to raise your own cattle. You can get it in government shops, but the price is in CUC and it's extremely expensive.
Pollo: If you have a cow and you want to slaughter it and eat it, you can't. You'll go to prison.
Rasillo: Well, it's 15-20 years of prison if you steal a cow, kill it, and sell the meat. If it's your own cow and you kill it and eat it, you'll have to pay a big fine.
Pollo: If you want to eat the dead cow you have to prove that you didn't kill it. There are farmers who leave their cow on the train tracks... *[laughter]*
Rasillo: I lived in a small town in Villa Clara called Sagua la Grande and every day the villagers would tie up a cow on the train tracks and everyone would hide in the bushes. They looked like an army of people with machetes. One day I came home with a chunk of what I think was cow liver and my mom was like "where'd you get this?!" *[laughter]* All bloody.
Pollo: After you emerge from the bushes and butcher the cow, you have to hide so the police don't see you.

MRR: And then you cook it up at home and invite your neighbors...
Pollo: No, you don't tell your neighbors. *[laughter]* Maybe your neighbor is a state security agent...

MRR: Alright, one last question, returning to the topic of music. Are there foreign bands that tour Cuba?
Pollo: Thanks to Solidarity Rock, which is how we are able to be here. Thanks to Drew McIntosh who has a really visionary spirit. He's helped a lot. We've done tours with some Canadian and American bands. Three weeks ago, CJ Ramone played Havana, and it was all over TV about how his was the first US band to tour Cuba. I wrote him an e-mail telling him "No, no, no, it's not true." Uh Oh from Milwaukee was the first US punk band to go to Cuba, in 2012. Arrabio and Adictox toured with them.
Rasillo: There is also a festival called Brutal Fest, organized by a French guy who lives in Cuba. He does two fests per year, one in winter and one in summer. It's like five or six bands from Europe and also Latin America. Adictox played in the last one and Arrabio has played it before too.
Pollo: There is a new fest called Patria Grande.
Rasillo: Yeah, that one is just bands from Latin America.
Pollo: Not just punk, but everything. Adictox played the first one.
Rasillo: Foreign bands coming to Cuba is a new thing. Before, it would have been impossible, but now it can be done with help from people like Drew (Solidarity Rock) and David Chapet (Brutal Fest). There are some mechanisms in place now and the government allows it. They have realized that the rock movement in Cuba is not an enemy. It's not a friend either... but it's not an enemy.
Pollo: We're critical.
Rasillo: Exactly. So every year we have these things happening. It allows us to share and exchange with bands from all over –Europe, North America, Latin America.
Pollo: So far nobody from Africa, but it would be really cool.
Rasillo: That's what's happening now, lots of festivals. There is a national one too in Havana, Santa Clara, and Holguín, but these are just for Cuban bands. It's been going on since 1990 and we've played in it.

MRR: You've been involved since 1990?
Pollo: No, no, not me, I'm only 31!

MRR: I was going to say, you look well preserved.
Daimel: Well, I was there! *[laughter]*
Pollo: I think the alcohol and sun ruins us actually. In Cuba we don't have drugs, but we have a lot of alcohol. And it's so hot there, all the time.
Rasillo: I hate it, I've lived there my whole life and I can't take the heat.

MRR: Thank you all so much!
All: *[wild cheering]*

solidarityrock.bandcamp.com / arrabio.bandcamp.com / adictox.bandcamp.com

RIGHT: ARRABIO

MANSION

I first saw Mansion play on an afternoon at the Berkeley Museum and Pacific Film Archive. The towering Brutalist-style architecture in the room coupled with the fact that the crowd consisted of families and museum members made for a surreal setting for such a sonically abrasive band. I got the impression that the crowd, while very polite, didn't really know what to think. It was perfect.

The term No Wave is often lazily thrown around when describing Mansion and that's really selling it short. The songs are surgical, methodical, and sparse with disorienting moments of extreme beauty and power layered throughout. Upon first listen you might not be won over, but by the third you are completely and totally hooked. The band lured me into doing this interview with promises of morning booze and breakfast. I was into it.

Interview and introduction by Mattey Hunter. Photos provided by the band.

Candace, vocals | Adam, guitar | Jeff, drums | Matt, guitar

MRR: The first time I heard your band was when I moved to Oakland. Like, the first day, at my new house. I was living with Ronnie, your former guitarist, and he told me he was in this band where "one guitarist tuned every string to C and the other guitarist never tuned."
Candace: He didn't even say which one he was?

MRR: Nothing else. That was it.
Adam: We should start putting that on the fliers.
Jeff: Adam and I had been in a band called Men's Room that was kind of like the precursor to Mansion. Me playing drums, Adam playing guitar in a very similar style, and Erin Basset singing.
Adam: That was in Atlanta.
Jeff: We had this insane burst of like...well we wrote all these songs, we made a tape and we went on tour up to New York and Boston and then came back. Then Adam moved to Oakland. It was weird, the band was like four months old. It was sort of similar to Mansion but way less developed. Then I moved out here maybe two years after Adam and we talked about maybe trying to do another rock thing. Adam was playing electronic music and Ronnie happened to be moving here at the exact same time. Adam knew Ronnie from growing up in Columbia, South Carolina. Ronnie left the band about three months ago and Matt joined.

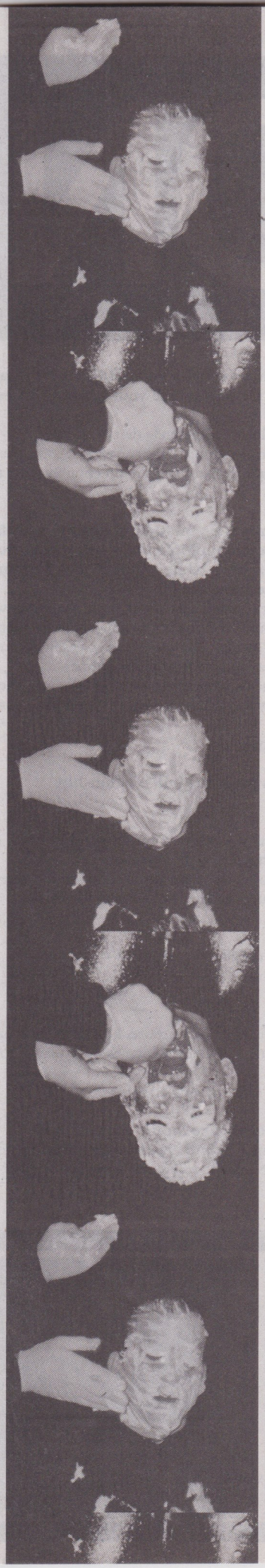
MRR: I've been listening to your new record a lot on BART with a pair of studio mixing headphones to try to imagine your writing process and figure it out.
Jeff: Most of the songs are written almost completely democratically.
Candace: My writing process comes from getting to hear an almost completely formed song that I get to kind of help move in a certain direction in order to make it more fertile for a vocal line.

MRR: I was thinking that there might be multiple songwriters in the band because it sounds like there are multiple ideas being executed simultaneously; like a drum hook going while a guitar hook is going layered with a vocal hook all at the same time.
Jeff: We understand that there is a very limited amount of sonic space that we can work in, especially with the amount of noise happening, so we're pretty sensitive about not letting the guitars overlap. Because it can so easily become a huge mess we are really conscious about not letting that happen.
Adam: It's pretty subtractive. When we write there will be a lot of "Hey, can you do that but actually not play any of those notes?" It's all about *not* playing.
Matt: It's about the notes you don't play.

MRR: The guitars seem to have a push and pull relationship.
Matt: A call and response, almost.

MRR: What influences would you say you are pulling from? Even if it's just individually and even if they are a bit abstract.
Jeff: I think there is definitely a vibe or imagery we are all shooting for. There is definitely a minimal, dark, fucked up vibe that we're trying to achieve.
Adam: You think fucked up?
Jeff: Sometimes yeah.
Candace: You mean fucked up like "not done correctly?"
Jeff: No, like something's wrong with it.
Candace: Disconcerting?
Jeff: Yeah, totally.
Adam: I feel like some things are left vague on purpose. Not even dark; just like we don't play a note here then it has a kinda...if we were to play a note there then it would have a set mood.
Jeff: We consciously try to stay away from playing chords.

MRR: What was the recording process like for the *Early Life* LP?
Jeff: It was really crazy and fucked up. I'd fly to Nashville on my girlfriend's flight benefits. So I'd fly standby to Nashville where my uncle lives.



MRR: Standby is where you just show up to the airport? And you fly for free in extra seats, right?
Jeff: Yeah, I fly for free. Somebody doesn't make it [for their flight] so I get a ticket. And I did it twice and had to make it there and back within a weekend both times. I flew to Nashville where my uncle is an engineer at a place where they try to develop country music acts and then sell them.
Candace: Uncle John.
Jeff: Yeah, Uncle John. So sometimes they cut demos in the studio. Sometimes they cut Dolly Parton in the studio and stuff, it's weird. We did drums there.

MRR: You went to Nashville alone, correct? And then brought it here for everyone else to finish on top of those tracks?
Jeff: I played to a click track first and then everybody else recorded to those pre-recorded drums.
Candace: Yeah. I felt like the recording process and the editing process especially was a unique view into the unraveling of one man's mind.
Jeff: It was really stressful for me, man. It was crazy.
Adam: We also tracked everything that wasn't drums in our practice space, which is also a space where they throw raves. You might be working on something then you feel a thump and it's a rave starting up.

MRR: *Teenage* **raves right?**
Jeff: Yeah, not the most ideal space to record. We started recording vocals there and then we had to stop because of the noise.
Candace: And a soaring metal band was practicing.
Jeff: And they were building a staircase outside.
Candace: And then we recorded the rest of the vocals in my bedroom. That's actually where I can get the most free. Actually, I can get free anywhere; I just don't like to leave my bedroom if I don't have to.

MRR: Yeah, I don't think that's a secret.
Candace: No, it's not.
Jeff: Then I mixed all of it and Uncle John mastered it.

MRR: What did Uncle John think?
Jeff: He's into it. Uncle John is my like 60-something-year-old uncle. He has an appreciation for everything. He would be into Gang of Four or Sonic Youth but he also knows a shit-load about real country music as well as "industry country music," because that's what he does. I know he feels like he is in a weird spot because of where that genre is right now. Like being influenced by hip-hop and—

MRR: Isn't Taylor Swift supposed to be a country artist?
Jeff: Exactly. It's bizarre.

MRR: I read an excellent Ian Svenonius quote from his book *Supernatural Strategies for Making a Rock'n'roll Group.* **One idea really stuck with me, something to the effect of: going to punk shows is like going to church these days; no one actually gets anything real out of it, they just feel that attendance is mandatory.**
Jeff: Oh that's fucked up! I wouldn't fucking go if I wasn't going to get anything out of it.
Adam: I think that's probably true.
Candace: That *is* true. That's a really good assessment.

MRR: Do you feel that your live performance is geared toward combatting the stagnant atmosphere that plagues some punk gigs?
Candace: Well, okay, this is a really good analogy I feel because I grew up Catholic and Catholic mass is fuckin' boring. I was deeply religious as a child, too, so I was really sad that this thing that I was supposed to do every week to celebrate a very important thing in my life was so fucking boring. And I would be really jealous of my friends who were Baptists who sang in church in a really animated way, ya know, and other denominations that maybe didn't have as much bling in the church but they were actually excited to be there. They seemed to have a sense of community and I feel like if the church analogy is correct then punk shows have definitely turned into a Catholic vibe, but like, *new* Catholicism where it doesn't even look as good anymore. It's not even a deep, emotionally-rooted ritual now. It's an empty one.
Adam: That's funny because I grew up Methodist and I was always like, *man, Catholicism is so cool*, like the art is really nice and austere and they speak in this language no one can understand. *[laughs]*
Candace: What you are describing is an old Catholicism that I actually would love to extend in my performance. That is definitely a big influence in a way that I don't think about a lot. I recently spoke about it with a friend of mine who is becoming a minister. Actually, my first band, playing with three other boys, two of them ended up becoming spiritual leaders later. *[laughs]* One of them is becoming a minister and the other is a Buddhist chaplain. And I was talking to the minister and he—

MRR: You stay in contact with these people?
Candance: Yeah! It's like free therapy! We were talking about Catholic influences in my life. He asked me if I had any still because I'm not a Catholic anymore. I said "no" and then I looked in my room and I saw an ornate, golden sconce and a straight-up giant Catholic saint painting above my bed. And also like, incense and other very obvious religious imagery, in a very Catholic way. And then I told him, "Never mind." So, the things in performance that are affected by my religious proclivities and background have to do with what Adam was saying. Like, with a certain kind of austerity and a certain kind of meaning attributed to certain movements or what you say, you know? So that's fine if punk shows have to be like a church, but it has to be a church that is spiritually meaningful still.
Jeff: We want to do something interesting. None of us, I don't think, have played in a straight-up punk band.
Adam: I don't really think that *this is* a punk band at all but I understand what you are saying.

MRR: I mean, you're playing in DIY venues in the Bay Area, where it's all set up by a punk DIY community. That's where it originated.
Candace: Sure. It's a scene that we have all been in at one time.
Adam: I think we are lucky to be in a spot that [has] really good DIY stuff that's not so explicitly dogmatically punk. You could play ten different DIY venues around here and that doesn't mean you are going to be playing with mohawk punk bands. There's still some culture that has some of the same ethics that's not just purely traditional.
Candace: Since we kind of grew up in those scenes the takeaway was more of an ethical one than a musical one, and I feel like that puts us in a certain kind of space as far as writing and when it comes to managing our shit, our band and where we play, and things like that.

MRR: Punk rock is so many things and I feel like a lot of people walk away with an ethic just wanting to be totally creative and being really glued to that. Anyway, that leads to of another question I had—
Candace: Is it "how punk are you?"

MRR: Yeah! How punk are you?
Candace: 9 out of 10?

MRR: Yeah, and where is your Black Flag tattoo?
Jeff: My Black Flag tattoo is on Adam's ass.

MRR: I can't really avoid Bay Area specific questions. Especially considering people who don't live here will be reading this interview and need context. It seems like a band like yours fits in here in Oakland and it makes sense. Do you feel like this is a place that provides you with support in a way that maybe other cities wouldn't?
Jeff: I think the answer is absolutely yes. I don't know if our band would thrive as much if it were in Atlanta or Los Angeles. Probably not.
Candace: Not in Honolulu [where I used to live].
Adam: It's easy to get burnt out. There are so many inspiring and crazy things happening here all the time, creatively. I think we take it for granted, but we definitely soak it up. It's also a place where people's idea of fun is actually to go to a show and not, like in Georgia, [where] it was just bar culture.

MRR: Is there a noticeable difference between playing Oakland versus San Francisco?
Candace: I like playing in San Francisco because I feel like we are infecting them. I think more nasty Oakland bands should go over and spread their filth.
Jeff: I get the impression that Mansion is an Oakland band even though two of us now live in San Francisco. I feel like the scene in San Francisco is really loosely knit.
Candace: It's inhospitable to artists for rent if nothing else alone. There are some hold-outs though. The booker at the Hemlock has been really supportive of us.

MRR: What is the other thing you all do besides play in Mansion?
Candace: Musically?

MRR: No, what's your other thing? You are all multi-dimensional people.
Candace: I fuck with computers. Actually, this is something very specific to Oakland. There's a pretty weird and cool scene of people that fuck with computers. And it's a strange contrast to the monolith that is startup culture; because these are all people who are absolutely brilliant, probably more brilliant than people participating in startup culture, who have decided to use their skills for civic and DIY purposes, and that's something that I'm interested in.
Adam: I have a solo thing called Cube.
Candace: [When he joined] he was introduced on our Facebook page as Adam "Cube" Keith. How did you like that, Adam?
Adam: I wish that would stop, but I do that project kind of obsessively all the time and I've also been playing chess and trying to get back into learning how to play tennis.
Jeff: I'm working too much at the hospital and trying to screen print when I can. Lately I feel like I've been able to have the time to find new music. For a minute I was really out of the loop with that shit.

MRR: It gets weird when you fall behind on that.
Jeff: Yeah, it feels really bad.
Candace: I actually really want to know what everyone here is listening to.

MRR: I'm getting to that!
Matt: I play in another local band called Lil Dowager which is the opposite of Mansion. It's just about playing as many notes as you can and just being as spazzy as you can. Also, in my free time, I am trying to learn jazz guitar. I'm a big jazz nerd, I really love jazz.
Candace: I think your other band might also be comprised of much better musicians than us, in general.
Matt: Yeah, I studied composition in school and what not.

MRR: So you were a music major? And don't you have a recording degree, Candace?
Candace: I have a Bachelor of Science in Music Engineering. Adam, you have a Bachelor of Science too, right?
Adam: I went to school for journalism, actually.

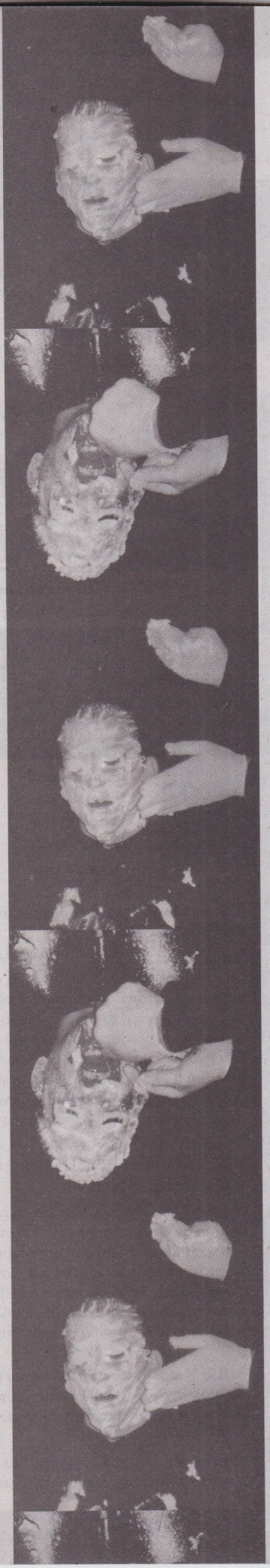
MRR: How am I doing?
Adam: Good.
Jeff: I went to school to take x-rays so I could have free time to play music. I don't know if it's quite worked out the way I wanted, but I think I finally found a job where they are okay with me taking two and a half weeks off to go on tour.
Candace: Matt and Adam are still fuck ups in the sense that they can dedicate so much of their life to the thing that they love.

MRR: Who are your favorite Oakland bands? Plug someone you like.
Jeff: Mine used to be Stillsuit, man! I fucking loved Stillsuit, but they quit about six months ago.
Candace: Black Dog. I'm largely influenced by the performance aspect of that band.
Adam: There are so many bands. Trying to narrow it down...Oracle Plus, SBSM, Business Etiquette, CCR Headcleaner and Ron Spoons.

MRR: Who's putting out the LP and what is the label all about?
Jeff: *Degenerate*. It's not a record label, it's a zine. Some of the issues are records now.
Adam: They did that Violence Creeps flexi-disc that was part of the zine.

MRR: Who did the album art and what is the concept?
Adam: It was a collaboration. Mel from Oracle Plus and I kind of set-up the photo. There were some themes. Pageantry was a word that came up. Also, primping—
Candace: Pampering.
Adam: Primping and pampering, both.
Jeff: Vanity.
Adam: But also the line between that and more invasive—
Candace: Oh shit, I wish I could remember the name for the food fetish…Slopping?
Adam: Glop? I don't know what this is called but I should know. I was looking at that fetish website a lot called *Messy World*. It's also an evolution of this character that me and my friends made up called Cups. Cups had eggshells over his eyes, but he was also almost always in a spa type situation that was at the same time somewhat torturous. It was Ronnie in Cups form getting slathered.
Candace: What's really fucked up is that Adam made the whole band "Get Cupped" in that way for the photos.
Jeff: And no one's pics turned out very well except for Ronnie's.
Adam: Wait. Is it globbing?
Candace: Sploshing.
Adam: That's it! I knew it wasn't soaking.
Candace: It's not soaking. You know better than that.

Mansion's Early Life *LP will be released soon as* Degenerate #17. *Pre-orders available now at degenerateephemera.bigcartel.com. If you're located in the Bay Area, you can get a copy at their record release show on November 20th at Life Changing Ministry in West Oakland, also featuring performances by Silver Shadows, Daisy World, Drought Spa, and Obsidian Blade.*



SIN MOTIVO

Introduction by Grace Ambrose. Interview by Payton.
Photos provided by Will Mecca, Andi Harman, and Darren. Artwork by Olivia Gibbs.

Fort Worth, Texas's Sin Motivo push the limits of the hardcore form, familiar building blocks tempered with the hallucinations induced by a life in the desert. Is Fort Worth in the desert? I'm not sure. What do I know? I've never lived more than 100 miles from the ocean. Sin Motivo is a refreshing reminder that old structures still contain new possibilities. They have a new LP out soon on Not Normal, Adelante Discos, and Erste Theke Tonträger. Pick it up.

Ramón, vocals
Jarey, drums
Shea, guitar
Daniel, guitar
Jeramy, bass

MRR: How did this band get started? How did this come to be?

Jarey: So I moved in with Ramón. At the time, neither of us even had bands. Shea didn't really have a band either. We all have progressive ideas and we all wanted to produce "an original punk rock and roll product" so we brainstormed different ideas. Shea had a figurative journal of riffs stored in Soundcloud and we all discussed the idea of creating a refreshing new hardcore sound at a time when hardcore was becoming boring.

Shea: I remember Ramón wanting to do a band where he sang in Spanish.

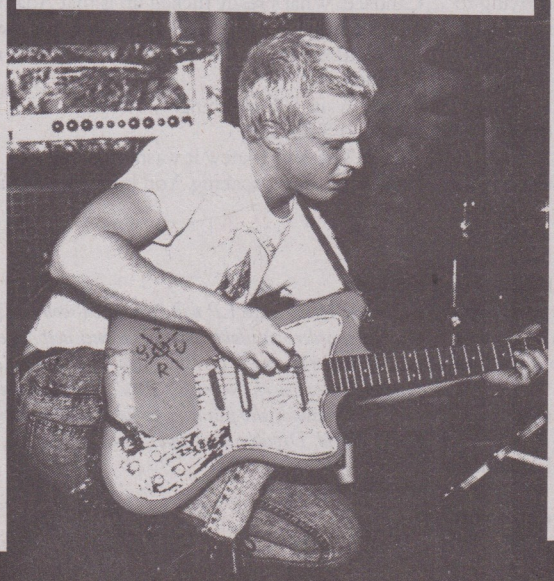
Jeramy: I had always wanted to play in a band with Shea and I remember talking to him about it several times. In my memory Ramón came home from a trip to Europe and was really energized to start a new project and so was I. Ramón told me Jarey was on board and that's when I knew it would be a really fun project.

MRR: Ramón, what is the importance of singing in Spanish? How that came about and what it was like for you to start writing lyrics?

Ramón: Well, it's a very big part of my life, part of my identity. I wanted my contribution to this band to be very honest, so that's a big chunk of it. Writing in Spanish isn't the easiest, since my family only used Spanish at home. Writing and singing in Spanish is a way for me to keep my roots close.

MRR: So is it more of a personal thing to you or are there implications beyond the personal for you?

Ramón: I guess it's partially personal. The only punk band I've ever listened to or seen that has made me cry is Los Crudos. That band touched my life in a way that no other band has since. They're a huge influence on me. It's naive, but my hope is that our lyrics being sung in Spanish serve as a form of empowerment for Latinos in North Texas.



Jarey: Yeah, whenever we first started talking about what we wanted to do musically, we would basically just have long conversations during late nights hangin' on the front porch. I asked Ramón amazing questions like, "Do you dream in Spanish?" [laughs] I guess I assumed that he did.

MRR: What are your main influences when it comes to lyrical content?

Ramón: Jorge Luis Borges and things that are personally upsetting to me. The Drug War in Mexico is something I feel like I'm constantly thinking about. It's not as far removed from our lives as I feel most people think it is. Our partying is a huge source of income for cartels. Most of my family still lives there, too, so I hear some crazy shit sometimes.

Anyway, I do feel guilty about my lyrics, though. Like, some of the songs on the new LP are about the current War on Women in the U.S. and the femicide in Ciudad Juarez, but, at the same time, I want my lyrical style to rip off Borges. I'm conflicted about this, I guess.

MRR: When you started the band you set out to do something different than what you were hearing in hardcore at the time. What were you hearing at the time? How did you want to approach it differently?

Shea: Well, when the band started I don't think there was really any concept of what the band would become or how we would actually interact as musicians and vibe together and grow in that way.

Jarey: When we started out, I hadn't played music in a very long time. But I never stopped listening to hardcore. I've always had opinions about "the current state of hardcore." It's important to me. I like to have an opinion and understand what's happening—in that order, ha. So after the mysterious guy hardcore thing that happened before Sin Motivo, it felt like an exciting time! I think we can credit Recide for pioneering the "new" hardcore sound. It was very separationist and beautiful! They were deliberately trying to break away from the conventions of the powerviolence sound or, like, the old-guy-doom-crust-warrior or metal-warrior, thrash-party-punk sound and the complete ridiculousness of all that—it was a statement from pissed off kids and it was authentic and totally inspiring! There was all of this bullshit going on in hardcore and a few bands like the [now defunct] Recide or Condominium, not to compare the two, were producing creatively dissident music. I think bands like Recide and their contemporaries made a conscious decision to remove the punk sound from something that was dying—a suffering scene—something that was just disappearing. We found many Texas bands trying to restore the youthful spirit to it all, consciously or not. I'm getting older

and I don't feel like I necessarily have anything youthful to restore to the sound of hardcore, but I do feel like I have something new to offer. That will always be important to me and I'll always be inspired by the kids who make it happen.

MRR: So clearly the sound of the band has progressed significantly from the early days to the new record. Was that progression intentional or something more organic?

Ramón: Definitely organic. I think in the beginning it was pretty straightforward, but with a twist. I've heard other people describe us as hardcore punk with maybe a little psychedelic element, I don't know. It's a little more difficult to describe now, I guess.

Jeramy: Yeah, it was an organic process compared to how our first batch of songs came out. I feel like most of the songs were produced as a result of improvising while practicing. There's a feeling we all get when we're reading each other as musicians after playing all of this time, and it's obvious that when we're clicking or following each other's leads that it's something special to all of us. Sometimes I don't even know where these sounds come from. It was really elevated after Daniel joined our group. For me, that solidified what we were going for.

Jarey: The way that our sound developed was very organic. I think Ramón's lyrical content helped us loosen up as well. Everything is fluid. We like to keep our ideas open and I try to get everybody on the same page. Nothing that we write is ever really finalized. Everything changes all the time. Over time, Ramón's lyrics began to reflect that. It's like we're navigating something—we're trying to figure out shit and it's interesting how his lyrics mirror the fluidity of our songwriting process. It's very exploratory! We have our improvisational parts and all that BS and we enjoy feeling lost. We set our songs up so that we can get lost and create unique moments and experiences every time we play. I kind of demand that. I don't smoke weed.

MRR: I think that's interesting, 'cause I feel like in a lot of bands, the drummer couldn't demand much of anything from the other players. It seems like much of what happens musically is determined by what you do. Was that something that just kind of happened from the beginning due to your style? Was that a conscious decision?

Ramón: Yeah, I think Jarey kind of took the reins early on.

Shea: It came about naturally as we started to incorporate more improvised, free parts into our live sets that allowed Jarey to have more control over the direction of the songs. [Then we tried] to channel or capture that energy when writing new material. I think the way our sound has evolved over the years is indicative of us embracing that openness.

Jarey: Yeah, I just try to help everyone to keep an open structure. Shea has provided almost every single riff that we have, except for the more dirge-y songs, which are purely Jeramy! It's so weird to me that all of our really slow riffs are, like, Jeramy's riffs. But yeah, from the beginning, Shea has always just pulled shit out, and that gives me instructions on how to tell everyone what to do.

Ramón: I think it's been a pretty good back-and-forth between both of y'all.

Jarey: We do have the open jam during practices, which I feel is my fault, guilty as charged, and can sometimes be frustrating—just starting with a basic riff and jamming on it until it becomes something else. Phish.

Daniel: Yeah, I don't think anyone's ever felt it to be an annoyance. I think we all feed off of it, entirely. It's where a lot of what we've learned to do together has come from, so I think it's always been key, and is a good way to get into the mindset when we're trying to write. It's just a good way to get where we should be mentally when we're collaborating.

Jarey: I agree, and I think it's brought us very close, both musically and personally. I feel very intimate with the rest of the band, and I don't know if that comes across, but I feel like I really connect with them. It's a special musical relationship that you can't just figure out and that's why it feels like organic hippie magic. It's an organic connection in that we make musical decisions together without really having to talk about it—we just do it in the moment, and I think it's a very beautiful thing. Like, that's how I play, personally, and I think that most of us have developed a sense of that as a band together. I've watched everyone in the band grow musically, to the point that we don't have to think about what we're doing. We're just losing it [laughs] and I think a lot of our sets reflect that—we're all losing it and we're all together. Just like Bob Marley and the Wailers!

Daniel: There's some level of unpredictability about our sets as well, I think based on that, since everything is centered on the way that it's all kind of meshing and flowing together. Sometimes it doesn't lock in exactly and can make for some funky shit.

Jarey: Yeah, definitely. It's not always there. If it's not there, we all know it and we all feel it's awkward for everybody watching. And it is awkward for everybody! But when it's there—and I believe we're all on the same level—when things are locking in, it doesn't matter what the crowd is like or what anyone's doing. We're just gone. We're in this, like, weird dimension.

Shea: It's like a different zone. At least for me, whenever things are clicking between us during a set and we're really together on something improvisational, it's almost meditative. I go into a sort of trance-like state where I'm focused solely on the sound, the noise or whatever energy we've created and try to tune into that and let it take me wherever it's going. It's hard to tap into that kind of feeling for me if I'm writing or playing songs that are very linear or structured and don't have the openness that we try to encourage.

MRR: Your longest recorded song is around twelve minutes, right? Are there any limits to what y'all would do?

Shea: If we could write a song that's 20 minutes long, [and have it] still be interesting and not just filling time or messing around, we would.

Daniel: Yeah, I think the key is just not wasting any moment in the song.

Shea: I don't think anything is off the table for us, really.

Jarey: Right. I think that's probably our biggest difficulty—that we don't actually want limits. Therefore, we don't know what we're supposed to do, and while that's our greatest freedom, our greatest blessing, it's also our greatest curse in that it keeps us from understanding what our possibilities really are and what we should be able to do—we just don't know what the future ever is and we have to toss ideas out there and swing our figurative bat at our curveball ideas and hope we hit a home run, to make a perfect baseball analogy. We all love baseball very much! [laughs]

Shea: And that's a huge part of why it's been two years between our last release and the new LP. We're always writing stuff, trying out ideas, tossing ideas, then taking an idea and going with one version of it and tweaking it until it's on the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh iteration of the same song or even like a ten-second part of a song—just constantly rewriting and revisiting everything until we're satisfied with where it's at.

Daniel: I think it took us longer to finish that long song—I say finish but I guess it's still not really finished since there's no definitive version of it

for us—but I think that song from the beginning of the writing process to recording has taken longer than anything else we've done as a band—probably longer than writing the entire demo.

Shea: For sure, yeah. I guess it's just a lot more of an exhausting process writing the songs now that it's become so open and we've grown into the sort of "anything goes" approach to putting songs together.

Jarey: Yeah, I've heard from comedians, for example, that they just like to work the crowd or try things on stage so they just throw out material and see what's happening, what's working. It's not like we necessarily do that with crowds, but we definitely treat our material that way; we just throw stuff out there and, afterwards, because it's improvisational, we're always talking about what works and what doesn't work. Everything changes, and once we record it, that's kind of just how it is. At least with our most recent stuff. It's improvised until we put it on a recording.

MRR: How do you all see yourselves relative to the punk scene now after having been a band for a while? Considering the progression from the demo, which was clearly a punk demo, to the LP which is something much more improvisational and loose, would you still consider yourselves a punk band? If so, in what ways?

"...my hope is that our lyrics being sung in Spanish serve as a form of empowerment for Latinos in North Texas."

Daniel: There's still a ton of punk in it though.

Ramón: I think we'll always be a punk band, in one way or another.

Daniel: Yeah, but I mean it's not like we're playing lounge covers or something. [laughs] You can tell the progression of the band if you listen to the recordings in a linear path. It sounds like the same band in a lot of ways, it's just been expanded. We're still the same punk band, it's just…

Ramón: We've grown up a little, we've changed.

Jarey: I mean, I'm not one to ever abandon the punk name. I'll never get rid of that. Punk is always going to be important to me and everything I do is going to be grounded in punk ideology somehow. That extends into my personal life and the way that I think about the world. Like, I can't imagine being in a band, playing and not feeling the spirit of punk. It sounds so cheesy, but it's true! I can't imagine what my life would be like without the spirit or ideology of punk. It controls all of my decisions and I think that it flows through our band, especially 'cause I have such a heavy hand in the way that we write songs and everything like that—the way that we do things. Flipper is the best band. I'm proud of who I am!

Jeramy: There's absolutely no doubt that we're a punk band. I guess if you ask ten different people you'll get ten different ideas on what punk is to them. For me, and I think for the rest of my bandmates, it's an idea that isn't bound to anything specific. Punk can be what you want it to be. It's boundless in what it can encompass musically as well as when applied to life. Everything I do will always be informed by punk, and even if people don't perceive what I'm doing that way, I do. It's just a part of who I am at this point.

MRR: So the LP is all done, it's been completed for a while right?

Ramón: Yeah, we finished recording this last May. It's free to download on our Bandcamp right now. It'll be out in Europe and America soon. Not Normal is putting it out with our friend Omar who runs Adelante Discos out of McAllen, Texas. European press will be through Erste Theke Tonträger.

MRR: Any tour plans yet to support the record?

Ramón: Yeah! Doing a small Texas/Mexico/NOLA thing in December.

MRR: Well, y'all seem to be doing very well! Any last words?

Ramón: Shout out to Ralph Rivera, Omar Luera, and Thomas Haug. Also, thank you for taking the time to do this, Payton! We love you!

Jarey: Rock over London. Rock on, Chicago. Wheaties: Breakfast of Champions.

Shea: Thanks Payton! Thank you to anyone who's ever watched an entire set of ours!

Tour dates:
12/2: Austin
12/27: San Antonio
12/28: McAllen
12/29: Monterrey
12/30: Houston
12/31: New Orleans

Contact the band at sinningunmotivo@gmail.com.
Band updates at sinningunmotivo.wordpress.com.
Download the LP at sinmotivo.bandcamp.com.
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PLEASE STEP DOWN.

TSA is a band that was formed in San Francisco by a group of four eleven and twelve year-olds. About thirteen years later they were asked by Maximum Rocknroll to submit an interview. In the intervening time they have produced some consistently weird and often unpopular hardcore punk, self-released a handful of tapes, and only broken up once. Interview conducted by Anna Wald and Max Wickham. Photos by Jesse Helland, Tsering Norbu, and Junie Olmedo.

Eli Groshelle - Drums | Jesse Helland - Guitar | Trevor O'Donnell - Vocals | Eli Wald - Bass

badbadbadtsa.bandcamp.com

TSA'S FIRST GIG, SAN FRANCISCO, 2003

TSA IN SAN FRANCISCO, 2015

This portion of the interview was conducted by Max Wickham, lifelong San Franciscan and a TSA fan since their inception.

MRR: There are two Eli's in TSA and I'm interviewing both of them. Start with the pertinent info. You guys have been a band for a long ass time.
ELI W: Our first practice was in 2002. Our first show was in 2003.
ELI G: We've been a band for fourteen years altogether.
ELI W: That's thirteen years.
ELI G: You said 2002.
ELI W: It's 2015. Thirteen years. That's over half my life.

MRR: Was there a point when you guys thought "we have ceased to be each other's first band, this isn't just a transitional moment in our lives, this is something that we feel strongly about and we want to keep going with it"? Most punk and hardcore bands do not have the longevity you guys have, starting a band when you're twelve or thirteen and staying at it.
ELI W: This band has evolved from our boredom as students to our general disappointment with life. I guess we have enough negativity and pent-up energy that still manages to find expression through this loud fast fucked-up music. When we started playing together, we didn't have that or any kind of intentionality in mind. We didn't tell ourselves that we were going to play punk shows. We just got together and started writing songs on acoustic guitars and pots and pans. I didn't know people could put on punk shows when we started playing together.
ELI G: We did a lot of our own DIY shows, back in the day.
ELI W: Park shows and other stuff.
ELI G: We didn't know shit.
ELI W: We weren't looped in at all. I didn't start going to shows until I was a few years older. At that point, I felt our music was already too weird or not tight enough to play those shows.

MRR: Well you guys are definitely very weird. The musical qualities are not straightforward; Eli W., your older sister was going to see shows.
ELI G: And my brother a little bit.
ELI W: But we started playing together when we were like twelve, she was going to shows when I was a little older. I guess my family was discovering what punk was around the same time. Then our first show was her sixteenth birthday party with some other punk bands.
ELI G: I feel like these guys have been my family in a major way. When me and Eli Wald first met each other, we were both in a new school, moving from public school to private school, we didn't really fit in. I never felt like anyone really liked me there. I was already into punk stuff, and that was definitely not cool in that school. My brother was into some punk things, and got me into that. So I knew shows were going on, but I never felt like I fit into the scene here. I never felt like anyone liked us, so we did our own shit.

MRR: When we were all growing up together and when we were in high school, there seemed to be a formula that allowed bands to play shows at, say, Hazmat or Burnt Ramen or something like that, and I think it's to your guys' credit that you never followed along with that. I feel like TSA didn't really find a place in the broader Bay Area scene, especially when we were kids. What does that say about you guys and say about the scene here?
ELI W: The music we were making when we were fifteen and sixteen didn't really resonate with a lot of the people who might have seen us play with other punk bands. We could tell that people weren't super into it. We just kept doing our own thing.
ELI G: I just didn't really give a fuck, honestly. I felt like I was doing what I wanted to do, and so it didn't really matter. If I was trying to play punk rock, it didn't really matter if it fit the norm of what the scene wanted.
ELI W: We were just going to do our own thing regardless.

MRR: It was gratifying to see you cultivate your own scene of people who were tangentially into punk. Even now, you played shows and tour with Asthma, who are people I don't see at a lot of the other shows, but who have a genuine interest in the music you're playing. What was it like cultivating that scene and those friendships, figuring out places to play that were very much places other bands didn't play at?
ELI W: I think the people we hang out with also feel alienated from not just society at large, but also existing punk scenes, existing music scenes. I think that's kind of true with newer people we're meeting and our friends' bands. They're also all on the fringe, used to doing their own thing. That's what we try to cultivate and do for ourselves.
ELI G: Look at what Trevor [TSA's singer] and Jesse [TSA's guitarist] do. Trevor is not involved in the punk scene, he predominantly makes house music at home and does shit like that, but then comes to practice and goes to the shows and really likes to rip it up, but doesn't even listen to much hardcore. Jesse does rap in a major way, but still likes to play guitar. We all like to do our own thing, and it doesn't need to be as narrowly defined as what the punk scene in the Bay Area defines as punk. Because I'm personally pretty fed up with the punk scene here, I very much feel on the outs, it feels like it's full of nepotism, you need to toe the line in a certain way to make things be cool for you.

MRR: But with Eli W. being the distro coordinator for *Maximum Rocknroll...*
ELI W: Yeah, full disclosure.

MRR: ...there's a lot to be said for social capital in the scene, for nepotism, all these things that allow for it to go further. Fitting in is a big question: What do you notice about how you fit in here or how you don't fit in? Working now on this larger level at an international magazine, expanding on your love of music, what do you notice about how TSA fits in or doesn't fit in with the broader community?
ELI W: It gives me more perspective. I can see other bands, either in interviews here or working with people around the world, not everyone is going to fit in with what's going on at the time. When I was a teenager it felt really weird. I was going to keep doing my own thing, but it felt shitty having other people not being into it or giving any kind of constructive criticism of the weird shitty music we were playing. It felt weird getting written off, I would stress out about it. As I've gotten older I've gotten more comfortable with the music. Working with a lot of very different kinds of Bay Area punks at *MRR* now, I don't worry as much about fitting in through the music. I feel more comfortable doing my own thing with this band. Now I'm seeing other people have a similar experience making weird music, some people are successful in building an alternate scene, sometimes people figure it out 30 years later. *[laughs]* I've just spent all year listening to Spike in Vain, I don't know.
ELI G: Lately, things have been different for us. In terms of getting gigs, we don't play a lot of hardcore gigs per se, but I feel like with the turn we've taken now, playing much faster, aggressive stuff, people seem to be more into it? Also, maybe because some of us aren't punks or participate in the scene in the same way, we're still just tangentially involved.

MRR: Does that outsider perspective work better for you, as a band and as a unit? Or is there something about wanting to fully fit in that appeals to you? I mean, you guys don't play music that's easily describable. I could say it's punk, it's hardcore, but really those terms are meaningless when talking about what you guys do.
ELI G: I'd say the outsider perspective works fine for us.
ELI W: It forces us to work more closely together as a band.
ELI G: And honestly I'm not extremely interested in finding acceptance in the scene, because I just like what I do.
ELI W: It's cool if people are into it. I feel like in this last year or so maybe, we've gotten on with some other bands, played some cooler shows, gotten a better response from the Bay Area scene. Maybe it's faster, or tighter, sounds more similar to other hardcore?
ELI G: But I still don't know if it does.

MRR: Being so close to people for that long, there's got to be a kind of unspoken understanding about how you all play music and how songs come about. I mean, I notice a lot of "math" elements in TSA: quick time changes, awkward movements, songs that have no repeating parts, stuff like that. It's really intriguing, and you've always done that. You say you're speeding up, but I think the groundwork has been laid in the way you write together. How much are you trying to escape that? How much are you doing the same things and trying to go further out there?
ELI W: When I write songs or write riffs, either by myself or collaboratively, I try to find the right balance between repetition and making something that's unexpected, because I think both those things are crucial in the momentum of a sick punk song. My favorite moments in punk and hardcore are when you think you're about to lose the beat and then suddenly you get back on it. I just want to figure out how to make those "Void moments" happen. I guess that's half in writing the riffs, and half in actually performing fast enough where you're constantly on the verge of fucking up. I've always had that kind of intention in mind. How can I make this weirder but still leave some aspect of a hook in it for someone to grab onto it? I've always been attracted to freakier music, with people breaking the formulas and making up their own

chords, in punk or in anything else. My favorite shit in high school was like Charles Mingus, jazz music, people pushing harmonic concepts to their extremes. I'm tryna figure out how to make that into punk music that we can play and that people can get into.
ELI G: I listened to a fair amount of jazz when I was in high school as well. I get really, really bored, very easily. Especially in punk you can fall into a rut and it can become un-interesting to play as a musician. That's why I like to fuck with the song structures, do weird things like that, not even repeat parts necessarily. It's a selfish thing. I have more fun playing it when I don't have to do the same thing constantly.

MRR: You brought up the point that Trevor writes and records house music at home, Jesse has his rap game going on, Eli W's here at *MRR*, Eli G's doing the door at El Rio—you are on very, very different paths, and have moved away from the singular entity that you were in high school and have kind of found your own lives apart. How does that work, with writing music or with what's going on?
ELI G: For me, practicing with TSA is the most enjoyable time I get in the week; it's not really an issue for me to get there. And I hang out with these guys constantly, even not at practice. Even though we're into different things and obviously are on our own paths we still have a really deep love for each other.
ELI W: I think the most fulfilling things I get out of life are playing this music and using the music to create other projects and voyages, playing a show, booking a tour, making art, making weird events and happenings. That's something we do together as a band that's really gratifying. Our favorite shows are the weird ones.
ELI G: Yeah. Like this boxing ring we're playing next week.
ELI W: Like weird generator shows, weird loft functions.
ELI G: This year's been fairly straightforward. A lot of bar bullshit. But that's San Francisco for you, in a major way.

MRR: You are the only band I can think of that are all people born and raised in San Francisco. You're all from The City. I think there's a difference between punks and alternative people that are from San Francisco as opposed to people who move here with their own ideas of what a scene should be, from out of state or from a different city. You guys seem to be the perfect example of that, in that when we were going to school, we were surrounded by so much Bay shit: rap, hip-hop, punk. Kids from SF have always seemed a little crazier, more off-kilter, a little more nuts. Maybe that has something to do with the fact that all our parents were fuckin' hippies or something.
ELI G: I'd say at least for me, when were first growing up, there was still a lot of urban decay in a lot of places. It allowed you to run wild as a teen. Throw DIY shows, break things, do graffiti, do whatever the fuck you wanted.
ELI W: We were making movies down by 22nd St before any of that was getting developed.
ELI G: The whole Dogpatch was all abandoned factories; we'd kick it there from being twelve on. It's a big city. It was easy to access drugs and alcohol too, for me at least. By the time I was fourteen, I was essentially autonomous in the city. I lived with my mom, but she worked all the time. I could do whatever I wanted, and I did to some extent. Rather than being isolated in a rural or suburban area, where I'd have to seek out likeminded people who were into punk or whatever, I got into everything: everything that interested me, I would pursue, and living in a big city it was easy to do that.
ELI W: It was easy to get around here. Which was ironically why I didn't get my driver's license until I turned 21, because I didn't even need it. You walked everywhere, took the bus everywhere. It's a big city but it's geographically small. It felt more violent when were teens too. I remember Jesse coming to band practice and telling me about how he saw somebody get stabbed in the neck on the bus.

MRR: Your music is hard to pin down. There are jazzy elements to TSA, but it's definitely not jazz. There are hardcore elements, but it's not hardcore. It can be called punk because it's a weird alternative kind of music, but I don't even think TSA fits the mold of punk as a style of music, but more as an aesthetic or an idea.
ELI G: Definitely as an aesthetic and an idea. We are a DIY band in a major way. We do our own shirt production and art, and do all of our own recording and releases. We dub all our own tapes, cut all our own shit, steal photocopies from OfficeMax. Influences-wise, at least as far as hardcore goes, the one thing that comes to mind that reminded me of TSA back in the day was when you burned me *It's In My Blood* by Bl'ast. We don't even sound anything like that, but those weird kind spastic elements...
ELI W: That was a huge influence on me too, like in the weird tent in your bedroom, you put it on and were like "oh yeah, Max played this for me."
ELI G: Yeah, Max, you helped me with US hardcore, you burned me every CD that you got. We don't limit ourselves to hardcore, but Jesse asked me to mention Dead Kennedys, that was a huge influence when we were younger.
ELI W: That was the only band I listened to as a freshman in high school. Hickey was a huge influence on us, in my approach to punk.
ELI G: In doing whatever the fuck you want.

MRR: Ideological influences too, there's a certain aspect of SF rap that I carry with me, ideologically, in a lot of things I do.
ELI G: That's part of TSA too, without a doubt. San Francisco rap and Bay rap, that California lifestyle if you know what I mean. *[laughs]* California Livin' dude.
ELI W: In a weird twisted way, the secondhand version of the hyphy movement was something we fed off of as freaky teens. The teenage drug culture of the Bay Area was something we were also into. Me not so much, but everyone else in the band.
ELI G: I kind of feel like for our sound now, I'm trying to cultivate fucked up '80s hardcore. It doesn't come across as that necessarily.

MRR: I could say you remind me of Die Kreuzen, even though you sound not a whole lot like that band, just the musical elements and tenor of your band remind me of that.
ELI G: Our influences are anger, frustration, impatience, apathy, pathy [sic].
ELI W: Eli was a teenage situationist. Musically, I also fuck with Saccharine Trust, No Trend, the Byrds, the Go-Betweens. New stuff too: Mystic Inane, Ivy (RIP), No (the UK one), Good Throb, Una Bèstia. I took a lot of computer music classes in school, which helped me figure out how to approach feedback, overtones, noise and stuff.
ELI G: I've been listening to a lot of soul, first wave ska, rocksteady, dub, dancehall. [Jazz is] a big one, we've always said that. Jesse took jazz guitar lessons; I was in a jazz band in high school
ELI W: I mean we all learned how to play instruments through high school music programs too, right?
ELI G: Gateway definitely did not have a high school music program. They canceled it my freshman year. But I got to steal their drum set. I still see Mr. Becker sometimes; he's supposed to do an experimental film as a video for TSA.

MRR: Is there anything else you want to say?
ELI G: It's fairly easy to get down on San Francisco today and what's happening here with regards to how the city and its culture are changing, but we can still cultivate pockets of individuality and places where people can express themselves without having to be refined or homogenized into fitting into what the scene is or how the city presents itself.
ELI W: Fuck the bougie monoculture, do your own thing.
ELI G: This bubble's going to burst and we're all going to party in abandoned condos.
ELI W: See you there.

This portion of the interview was conducted by Anna Wald, TSA bassist Eli Wald's sister. Their first gig was at her sixteenth birthday party AKA Annapalooza.

MRR: So you guys met in middle school. I've known all of you for fifteen years. That's longer than half of my miserable life. Are you embarrassed by your band name? Because I always have been.
ELI G: Yes.
TREVOR: Yes.
JESSE: Yeah
ELI W: Yeah.
ELI G: Extremely.
ELI W: I think I've been embarrassed of it in every form. Both as an acronym and as a full name.
TREVOR: More so as a full name.
ELI G: Hopefully they don't print our full name.

MRR: The other day my friend asked, "What's the name of your brother's band?" And I said "TSA." So he asked, "Oh, like, you know, like riding on the plane?" And I said, "Yeah. It's always been like that." Because I was too embarrassed by what it actually stands for.
TREVOR: The newest one that I've been doing is—
ELI G: True Sons of Anarchy, dude.
TREVOR: TSA stands for TSA Sucks Ass.

MRR: What is your favorite time either collectively or individually that me and Eli Wald's dad has yelled at you?
ELI G: My favorite one is when I left band practice, I went up the block and smoked a joint in front of somebody's house, then I went down and sit in front of your house to get picked up. Your dad comes down and he said, "Oh, what are you doing Eli?" and I say, "Just hanging out." Then he says, "Whoa, you must have just smoked a lot of fuckin' weed, huh?" I say, "Uh, yeah," and he says, "Hold on, I'm going to go inside, let me get you a breath mint". He runs inside and someone asks, "What are you doing?" and he says, "I'm getting Eli some gum because he smells like weed!"

MRR: Which of my friends would you either say was the scariest in high school, or who you hated the most?
TREVOR: Franny. There was that one time she came up and asked my why my pant leg was rolled up—I'd just been riding my bike—and this instinctual thing happened, I just said, "Fuck you."

MRR: How would you describe your loyal fan base of nostalgic friends?
ELI G; Dwindling.
JESSE: Dwindling rapidly.
ELI W: We've picked up new loyal friends to replace the weak ones. The "weak dudes."

MRR: Which one of you can most accurately recall the fake MySpace page you made of me?
TREVOR: "Anna Bald" right? What was the picture?
ELI G: It was her face superimposed on a bald man.
ELI G: Really crappy Photoshop.

MRR: What's your favorite high school drinking memory? As a group.
ELI W: Trevor drinking Bacardi 151 at Alta Plaza—
ELI G: No, it was Dolores Park
TREVOR: It actually was at Cala Foods, we started up at Dolores Park, and it hit my stomach at a park in the Castro that used to be a Cala Foods.
ELI G: We were in the tennis courts, Trevor throws up and it's almost all 151 and we're like "Whoa, shit is highly flammable. Let's light his vomit on fire." So we did, but it's just a little puddle of really low blue flaming vomit. Someone took a photo.
ELI W: If it were 2015 we would have 'grammed it.

MRR: Why and how the fuck do you all still live in the Bay Area? How have you not gotten out?
ELI G: I can't afford to leave.

MRR: If you leave you can never come back!
ELI G: If you don't have hella money here, it's not the easiest to leave.
ELI W: We've all considered it.
ELI G: We've talked about it. I also don't know where I'd want to live. A big part of it is actually being able to still play music with them.
JESSE: That was also what I was going to say but I didn't want to sound soft.

MRR: Aww!
ELI W: That's how we all feel.
ELI G: So if one of us moves somewhere, we all move there.
ELI W: Or just stop playing music forever.

MRR: Okay. That seems reasonable. What was the most poorly attended show you've ever played?
All: Murrieta.

MRR: Where?
ELI W: Murrieta, California. It's a small town in Inland Empire. Near Temecula. Last year we tried to book a Southern California tour, but the only gig that came together was in Murrieta, which we thought was close enough to LA. To be clear, it is not in Los Angeles. We hung out in LA one night, did karaoke, saw a fight at a karaoke bar, and got chili fries. Then the next day went to the show in Murrieta. There were three people there including the sound guy and two people from the other band.
ELI G: They were the band playing after us. So we had to stay and watch them.
ELI W: Both bands that played before us had left.
JESSE: There was a pregnant teenager at the show and a dude drinking Listerine in one of the bands.
ELI G: It was dope, for how weak it was.
ELI W: The week after we played there was when all the white people in Murrieta started picketing busses full of refugees...that place sucks.

MRR: Have you guys ever even recorded anything? I have literally no comments about your music.
ELI G: Yeah, we have.
MRR: Is it in tape form? Just like, so inaccessible?
ELI W: It's all tape. I guess it's on bandcamp now, and YouTube. We still have tracks on MySpace.

MRR: Oh, there you go. You guys should bring back MySpace.
TREVOR: Yeah, get together with Warren Buffet and Schoolboy Q.

MRR: Do you guys think that you'll still be playing music together in another fifteen years?
ELI G: Barring one of us dying.
JESSE: I'm just waiting for my rap career to take off, because after that I'm out of this band.
ELI W: I think we're all going to take off in separate careers, and then play a one-off show at Not Dead Yet 2030.

MRR: I think you guys will all be dads who jam together in a really sad garage.
ELI G: Hopefully I kill myself.
JESSE: In Murrieta.
ELI G: Hopefully I kill myself before that happens too. We'll all move to Murrieta together because it's so accessible, so beautiful, the people are nice, shows are great. There's a lot of water there too.

CATCH TSA IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST WITH ASTHMA: 11/19: PORTLAND, OR | 11/20: BELLEVUE, WA | 11/21: VANCOUVER, BC
11/22: SEATTLE, WA | 11/23: OLYMPIA, WA | 11/24: HANGIN' OUT WITH THE LUMERIANS AT THE MT SHASTA CO-OP

SA INT

FINLAND BOMBS THE WORLD

In 2011 I was in Finland for the Puntala-Rock Festival. I bought a lot of records, among them Sa-Int's Tulevat Lauhat Sateet EP, which was great! I thought that this band hadn't existed for years and here was a surprise! They are still around. I really liked their old EPs, especially their debut from 1986. I decided to do an interview with them to learn more about them– this band is worth it! Readers in Poland can read these stories in Pasażer #30. Since this interview the band has also released a split EP with MKHC– buy it while you still can!

Introduction by Grzester. Photos provided by Vote Vasko and the band. Fans of Finnish hardcore should write to Grzester: grzester12@poczta.onet.pl.

How did Sa-Int start? What does the name mean?

Sa-Int was originally formed in 1984 by Malja and Kuju. Malja had some previous experience of playing bass in a punk band, while Kuju on the other hand didn't even know how to play the drums, and volunteered by sheer enthusiasm. During the beginning the lineups changed a lot.

In the late '80s, the group changed their name to Insaint, mostly due to then-guitarist/vocalist Mika insisting on a change of direction. Under that name one 12" was released, which still had elements of hardcore, but was also quite punk rock-ish. After it, the band just basically died out because of disagreements between Malja/Kuju and Mika. In 1999 there were talks about the band possibly regrouping to play the last show at Lepakko, the legendary Helsinki-based club which was the epicenter of punk gigs in the '80s. It was demolished to give way to a new Nokia headquarters. However nothing happened, the club's last show went by and years drifted on. In 2006 Malja and Kuju were in talks about reforming the band again and contacted Ari, another local punk veteran. Malja had had enough of playing the bass guitar and wanted to do vocals instead, so Ari naturally became the new bass player. However the group still lacked a guitarist, and Ari asked Juha, who rehearsed in the same basement with his industrial punk band.

We first learned sixteen songs for the "30 years of punk" birthday gig held in Helsinki (playing alongside legends such as Kohu-63, Terveet Kädet, and Kansan Uutiset) and since the gig went well, all things considered, decided to carry on and perhaps even make some new music. We recently released our latest 7", Tulevat Lauhat Sateet ("There will come soft rains"). The name Sa-Int comes from the equipment control department of the Finnish army. Basically the organization where you get your boots, uniforms, blankets, whatever.

Were there any other bands in your town? How many punks were around you at school, on the street, at a concert?

Lahti, which is a small town 100km north of Helsinki, had some punks even in the early days of punk. That's probably why the early lineups of Sa-Int changed so much, and why it was relatively easy to find new members. Some other local bands were the notoriously drunken ensemble Lahden Raiskaus and their arch-rivals Sairaat Mielet, who were one of the first straightedge bands in Finland. Nowadays there are fewer punks, but the age of people is more diverse. We're slowly becoming the "old school" crew, and hopefully there will be new people to start new bands and organize gigs. I hope I'll be able to go see a local punk gig when I'm 65 (which is still more than 30 years in the future!)

All of your old records were pressed on S.A. Records. Was it easy for punks to press their own records? In Poland in the '80s it was totally impossible.

Back in the '80s there were vinyl presses even in Finland. Now we have to send the masters for engraving to Germany, Czech Republic or wherever. So in a sense, it was better in the past! Sometime during the '90s the last Finnish place closed down and the equipment was sold. Too bad, it would be so much more easier to also have a reasonably priced local option.

S.A. Records was never a sort of "real" thing, it just meant the band had pooled money to make the release happen. Even our latest EP was supposed to say it on the cover, but whoops, I got the information about that a bit too late and the covers were done already...

Have you played abroad? Somewhere closer to us than Lahti?

The band has been abroad a couple of times. Once the group traveled through Sweden to Denmark to play. The car broke down the first time just a few kilometers from Lahti, and eventually broke down completely somewhere in Sweden, so the group had to continue to Denmark by train...

Another "tour" was to Estonia, then in the Soviet Union. I think Sa-Int might have been one of the first western punk bands to tour the Soviet Union, even if it was just Estonia, which was one of the more relaxed states in the USSR...It was a really chaotic trip, which I guess kind of figures if you combine cheap vodka and young guys. We've been talking a lot with friends recently about the opportunity of touring. We'd really like to play outside Finland, you see. Of course the biggest problem is that we have relatively few contacts in central Europe, so organizing might be a bit difficult for us. If anyone reading this wants to help organize something, get in touch!

I'm interested in history and I've heard a lot about the Winter War, Marshal Mannerheim and Simo Hayha for example. Has the Red Army left its mark on the lives of the inhabitants of Finland in the post-war period? Would you rather everyone had forgotten about it? I ask this because in Poland a lot of people still have prejudices or hatred of the Germans or the Russians.

I'm also very interested in history, I have a quite a nice and ever-growing collection of history books at home. The whole Second World War definitely left a mark in Finnish culture. The first war against the Soviet Union, the Winter War, was a sort of a unifying experience for the country, where both the leftist and right-wing people united against an enemy they saw as a common one. We had had a civil war between these two factions only twenty years before, so it kind of healed some wounds from that time. The second war, Continuation War, was a dirtier affair, but such was our position between Germany and Russia back then, and I doubt there really was a lot of choice in the end. And I don't mean to sound like it was okay in my books to fight alongside Nazis against Soviets, but when you're in between two dictatorships, you pretty much have to make a choice. I think at least to some degree you Polish can relate to these geopolitical issues...

Currently we are being bombarded by a new revival of this whole war-thing. It basically started after Soviet Union fell, and nowadays Mannerheim is on the news again. There's a biography movie about him that's been in the works for at least ten years now, I doubt they'll ever manage to actually film it. Our national broadcasting company also filmed a short movie about Mannerheim in Kenya(!) where all the actors are portrayed naturally by black people. Of course this caused an absolutely hilarious uproar from the people, as the worst racists shit their pants for "the great national hero to be portrayed by a black man" and so on. I don't think we should necessarily forget our past—after all we're doomed to repeat the past mistakes unless we learn from them. However I find it somewhat repulsive people still take immense pride in something so tragic which happened a long time ago. It's horrible to see the cheap patriotism of t-shirts and jewelry with the Finnish coat of arms basically everywhere, while at the same time companies are outsourcing to the third world more and more, the economy is sinking, the social services are in trouble. If all those people saying they wear that patriotic crap out of "respect for the past generations" (or the war veterans or whoever) would, instead of just wearing a stupid shirt, volunteer to help at a local old people's home it would make a difference. And it might actually be even worth something. But you know how it is with this kind of people...

There's a lot of prejudice towards Russians still in the air. Quite a lot of "ethnic Finns" from Russia migrated here after Soviet Union fell, and I think it has partially fed the prejudice and racism. I don't personally give a damn where you're from—if you're a great person, you're fine. Assholes rarely are limited to one nationality, and we've got enough Finnish assholes here already. My German friend was once in one small town to see a gig, and a couple of local rednecks confronted him about "being a foreigner," but when they learned he was from Germany, they bought him drinks for the whole evening for being a "comrade in arms"... He quickly excused himself from their company, but I guess this goes to show the kind of prejudice and favoritism you can expect here.

And what is the attitude of the Finns to Nazism? Finland was long an ally of Hitler.

Historically speaking, I think there's more of a romantic view on our relationship with Germany, rather than specifically with Nazis. Imperial Germany supported the anti-communist side in our civil war and we were supposed to even have a German king, but then the First World War ended with Germany's defeat and we became a republic instead. Nowadays you can buy some shirts and whatever commemorating the Finnish volunteers for Waffen SS. As I previously mentioned, I consider any t-shirt patriotism pretty stupid and boring; this Waffen SS patriotism is just plain idiotic. I've been trying to come up with reasons why anyone would want to buy and wear clothing like that, but I can't really come up with anything plausible.

As for the "normal" person, I think he or she doesn't care about this whole thing at all, one way or another. So, in a way we're in a much more healthy environment than Latvia for example. The training wing of the Finnish Air Force still uses the swastika in its flag, which sparks some controversy every now and then, and always leads to the same discussion of "historical origins." The Finnish Air Force used it almost twenty years before Nazis even came to power. Should it be used today if it's sure to piss off some people? I don't know. On the one hand it's not "stained" by the atrocities. On the other hand, maybe it just might be easier and less controversial to use some other kind of symbol. In World War Two Finnish Jews were conscripted into the army just like every other man of the drafting age. In some places they even fought alongside German soldiers. Some hilarious situations must have emerged; for example, a few Finnish Jews were to receive German Iron Crosses for their merits in battle. They refused to accept them.

In Poland, Nazi skinheads were a huge problem for the punk culture. They were constantly fighting in the streets and at concerts, blood flowed frequently. Did you encounter similar situations in Finland?

We've had our share of neo-Nazis. Less troublesome than the notorious Polish ones though... I used to live in a smaller industrial town that didn't have any punks at all, just ex-punks who had become some sort of wannabe Nazi skinheads. Nowadays we also have these "non-political skinheads" who claim they're not political, yet aren't afraid to express xenophobic or racist opinions, listen to RAC and other racist bands. Then there's a group who actually try to be political neo-Nazis, but so far their attempts have mostly been a series of failures. Their political activity so far has been posting stickers around a couple of time (and taking pictures of these operations, and posting the pics on their homepage's "battle reports") and attacking a Pride march with teargas (for which they later went to court). Not really the smartest ones, as you can see, but what can you expect from someone who embraces National Socialism?

Over the years, has Sa-Int changed or retained the same spirit?

The way I see it, Sa-Int has always been more or less the same. Both the old stuff and the new stuff have political songs and more personal songs. The music has had some variations, due to the number of people who have contributed to the band, but I think even the music has always been rooted in fast punk and hardcore. Of course, now it seems the lyrics department is entirely in my hands, which means that I try to bring some anarcho-punk aspects into the group. Whenever I bring some

new lyrics, I pass them around the band so that anyone can say if there's something they cannot vouch for. I think it's quite necessary to be able to present ideas in songs that all the members can support. If nothing else, it tends to bring a bit more credibility to the opinion. I don't really see myself playing in a band with completely bullshit lyrics. I grew up with the ultra-political punk bands of the '90s (I'm only 35 this year...), and felt it natural for a punk band to have a manifesto. And that's also why I took special care to have the lyrics printed in both Finnish (in which they're sung) and English (to serve possible listeners abroad) in the 7" booklet. I wish groups who don't sing in English would more often provide translations of their lyrics. Using Google Translate to translate something from Polish, Spanish, or some other language I don't personally speak usually results in such a mess that I can only guess what the song is about. Even a slightly bad translation by a native speaker of the language is better than an automatic machine translation.

Tell us about Puntala-Rock. I went in 2011 and I think it is the best festival I've ever seen in my life.

Puntala-Rock is an annual open-door summer festival held in Lempäälä, south of Tampere. It's organized by punks for punks and very DIY. The first festival was organized in the early '80s, followed by a few years of nothing, and a couple of times in the end of '80s/early '90s again. Then more silence, until it restarted in 2000. It has been organized every year since.

There are some local companies who are sort of sponsors, to my understanding, in the sense that they get a small advert into the festival info booklet, but apart from that it's very non-commercial. Vastavirta, the punk club in Tampere, provides a beer tent for the festival. There are a lot of distros selling records, patches, and shirts, and a few booths for political stuff. There's a camping ground which is becoming a bit too full, since so many people want to come to the festival. I'm really happy for the whole festival. It's one of the high points of every summer and something to wait for. And it's even a really peaceful festival, at least if you compare it to "normal" festivals—relatively little violence and all that.

Sa-Int has played there a couple of times. We hope to be able to play there in the future as well. I understand there are so many great bands in the scene right now, so a couple of old farts from Lahti might not be too interesting for some. But apparently people were positively surprised about our performance back in 2009, as it's always a bit of a big question mark when an old band makes a comeback. One friend even commented how the band today finally sounds like how it should have sounded in the '80s... Who knows, maybe this is the best lineup, I couldn't say!

As a lover of Finland, of course, I read The Kalevala. Is it true that every Finn should also be familiar with it? Do you read any books? What would you recommend to someone who wants to read something more than Laama and Toinen Vaihtoehto?

I doubt very many Finns have actually read through The Kalevala. It's written as a rhythmic poem and I think most of the people would find it incredibly annoying to read because of that. Just like most of the people end up disappointed when they start reading Dante. I personally read a lot. I've always loved reading, be it novels, history books, comics, everything goes. Lately I've been rereading books which I read some twenty years ago. To see if I still like them and if I can pick up anything new from them I missed the first time. A lot of classic science fiction in them, Isaac Asimov, your very own Stanisław Lem, Philip K. Dick...Also reading Umberto Eco's Name of the Rose at the moment. In terms of Finnish books I really have to recommend Year of the Hare by Arto Paasilinna. It's a very punk novel, with a strong primitivist anti-establishment theme running through the story. Later

works by Paasilinna are repetitive crap, this one is his best.

Not so many movies come to us from Finland. What is important to see? Both old and new, in order to learn more about your country?

I naturally recommend basically anything by the Kaurismäki brothers, Aki or Mika. They're the most important, if not only real, directors in Finland. Most of their movies are located in Finland and they represent some aspects of life over here, although maybe through a bit of a sarcastic point of view. Since you like history, I'd like to recommend The Interrogation; it's a very powerful movie based on a true story. We have quite a nice small theatre in Lahti.

Taking into account the first four EPs and two LPs, which of your records do you consider the most important? Remember that your new material is wonderful!

My personal favourite of the oldies is the Valta & Vastuu EP, although I think Malja and Ari are not too happy about it, because it's too "heavy metal" for their liking or something like that. I've been trying and trying to get them to agree to add more songs from that EP to our live sets, but with little success so far.

In matter of importance, the first EP must not be underestimated. As primitive as it sounds, it's an important testament and a launching pad for all the things which would follow. The same applies for the second EP as well. I think the biggest issue with the first two is the rather horrible sound quality, due to inexperience of working in a studio environment. Actually, for one EP the band brought an Exploited record to the studio, and for another, the first Agnostic Front album, in order to give the sound engineer an idea of how they wanted to sound. Not exactly a story of a huge success in that regard.

The Exploited and Agnostic Front! Which bands were major signposts for Sa-Int when the band began?

Malja is a huge fan of British punk and hardcore, so there's a definite influence from that direction. Ask him about the Exploited, and he'll talk about how it's the greatest band ever until your ears bleed. Kuju was, and still is, crazy about the Ramones. I'd say that basically sets the foundation, simple DIY songs, anyone can play and also totally different from what you usually heard on the radio back then...

What did Sa-Int look like at the beginning?

Sa-Int looked pretty much like a traditional punk band of the '80s. Leather jackets, combat boots, mohawks...Kuju also had a "gig shirt" he used in playing, which he still uses today, even though it's starting to be a bit worn out... Basically he has played all but one (I think) gigs in that shirt.

Can we expect a discography release from Sa-Int?

Some master tapes of the EPs have been lost at least, that much I know. So remastering would have to be done from a vinyl source. We've actually been working on a Best Of-type compilation with a friend of mine. Carefully cleaning the records, ripping them for digital remastering and speed-correction. I think the whole project has been ready for release apart from the covers for at least a few years now. It's also going to be a cassette-only release, ha! The end result will sound really different from the crappy mp3s available in the net.... If it ever comes out, that is.

sa-int.bandcamp.com

BOOKS

Sub Pop USA: The Subterranean Pop Music Anthology, 1980-1988
Bruce Pavitt
400 pages | $35
Bazillion Points

The first issue of *Sub Pop* came out in May 1980, by which point the mainstream media had given up on punk and was busy exalting New Wave. Smelling a return to the kind of world promised with disco and arena rock many people like Bruce Pavitt dug their heels in in protest. His weekly radio show at Evergreen College featured new music that prized being innovative over being commercial. The progressive environment of this Olympia, WA school fostered creative and artistic movements. This setting is a very real presence that can be seen reflected on the pages of his zine. The writing in *Sub Pop* doesn't appear to have time for contemplation, resembling a gonzo radio program that was covering the scene as it exploded.

The early issues decried the corporate music manufactured in big cities like L.A. and New York, as well as direct some choice nastiness to the groups being exported into the U.S. from England. He doesn't entirely ignore the groups of these scenes but it is clear that his main interest was in the regions that were overlooked at the time. Places like Chicago, Minneapolis and Portland are given serious consideration as breeding grounds for talent. Do I need to mention this zine's impact on Seattle and Olympia?

Sup Pop came out of the gate with a revolutionary approach. Pavitt asked for any and all kinds of underground music to be sent to him, the prairie fire of ideas across the continent fanned by his cut and paste efforts. With the zeal of the first wave of punk alive in his approach, it is clear that he runs on these fumes well past his time.

There were only eight issues of *Sub Pop* as it passed through the decade. Most impressive is how it would change format and size between issues. This is one of the things I am drawn to, movements and mediums where anything is possible. For a couple of issues it was just a compilation tape, which I think makes sense—writing about music is rarely as effective as hearing it. By the late '80s Sub Pop stopped being a zine and became a column for an alternative newspaper, *The Rocket*. In the sixty-four columns printed here, Bruce continued to focus on reviewing new releases from independent bands. Besides the punk shit he also paid attention to rising popular trends in acts like Run–DMC and Metallica, signaling his openness to the shift in the culture outside of his scene. By the end of the decade Bruce ceased publishing to make Sub Pop a record label full-time. Cue the major media attention.

The value of time capsules like this book is that they can remind us that music and scenes should be allowed to evolve and change. By 1982 it is evident that *Sub Pop's* tone didn't seem too sympathetic to the rise of new bands playing hardcore. From the Reagan Presidency to shows plagued with violence, I can imagine Pavitt as an aging freak trying to process reality and call out what changes were worth supporting. Troublingly, though, at that time he also started to be frustrated with bands who espoused left-wing politics. He appears to have as much disdain for Crass and MDC's "generic" sounds as he did with the right-wing punk bands that sent him records. In his rush to review records he even confuses some bands' humor for politics—for example, his summation of Angry Samoans as fascist. But this is a common ailment of the punk journalism scene where short bursts of snarky commentary are the go-to approach when interpreting art. By the fourth issue his calls for "any and all bands to send in music" seem like a ruse to get stock for the record store that he helped to operate at the time.

The reviews themselves are pretty short, usually a couple of sentences ending in shots like "Do not attempt to operate heavy machinery while under the influence"; "Run out and steal your neighbor's copy of…"; "Throw away your homework, buy this book and get a real education." I found that these platitudes betrayed the fight against advertising culture by mindlessly using their tools.

There are some similarities here to the book of *Touch & Go* zines that also shares the same publisher. The timeframe, content, attitude and eventual resting place as a record label parallel each other. Most people will just flip through the pages of history here, randomly taking in the pages like candy. Surely, this book will enhance the hours one has to fart around on the internet. Bands like the Neo Boys are given more dimension and context that tempts discovery. This book is also valuable in showing more sides to the evolution of the most known punk acts. Bands like Big Black, Hüsker Dü and Sonic Youth were frequently written about, tracing the years as their recorded work started to improve. I think 1986 was watershed for what later would get packaged as "alternative." Again, the scene mutating.

The eight issues of the zine and sixty-four *Rocket* columns are given full pages to stretch out. The Rocket articles are laid out in an off-the-wall '80s style. I found the general aesthetic of the book to be ugly. Along with the garish layout of the columns, there are short essays before each issue written with enthusiastic dripping accolades in a faux nostalgic font. These introductions are from notable scenesters who waste space praising Bruce as if at some graduation ceremony. The exception is the piece from Calvin Johnson, who gives a clear window into where *Sub Pop* was coming from, as well as having some content in a couple of issues. To be fair there is some killer art to be found here by Charles Burns, as well as some eye-catching layouts, but by the late '80s it all feels dulled by slickness.

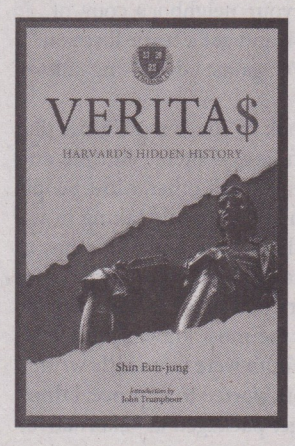
After being in *Sub Pop*-land for two weeks, I started to consider the work of its peers: *Cometbus*, *Flipside*, and *Maximum Rocknroll*. These publications also covered new music as it happened, but they also did a lot to expose punk personalities and ideas. What they did right was give space to people who were not in bands to talk about issues outside of music. The most evident place to find that was in these publications' letter sections, columns and classifieds. They also allowed more space for art. By pushing this angle of punk, the focus moved the revolution away from what was on stage to the space inhabited by individuals and collective projects. That is one thing I found missing in reviewing the legacy of *Sub Pop*. There are some whispers of this, like the interview Pavitt did with the Joe Carducci from Systematic Distro, but it is only enough to show us what's missing.

In some ways by moving his operations to an established commercial

publication Pavitt repeats what had happened to the countercultural press of the early '70s. Many radical newspapers became "alternative" to attract more people from the general public into their pages. The world of the normals eventually watered down the content. Perhaps the trade-off is the liberalization of the larger culture. Ultimately, though, the threat to capitalism became benign. The articles Pavitt wrote for *The Rocket* may read easier, his writing evidently aided by having more resources and focus to craft his words. Having a staff of people to proofread his articles and deal with the headaches of publishing allowed him to work on his delivery to a larger audience. It's the spunk of the early zines, however, that will likely capture the readers of *MRR*.

As someone who grew up in the suburbs, I can appreciate what Bruce's mission aimed for. The heartland can use a scorched earth campaign of art and freaks. There is a certain imperfect quality to the things made while doing a project alone, doing it DIY. What now to consider with this slick reenactment of an artistic car wreck? The junky faux nostalgic veneer of this book looks ready for deposit at some overpriced thrift store in rural nowhere. At best we're back to the fermenting mess that Bruce sought to help explode.

— Robert Eggplant



Verita$: Harvard's Hidden History
Shin Eun-jung
256 pages | $18.95
PM Press

One of the most intense moments of covering Occupy Boston in 2011 was the night Occupy Harvard set up camp in Cambridge; I can remember the feeling of hundreds of bodies caving in on my own as a mass of humans pushed against the locked gates surrounding Harvard Yard, later setting up dozens of tents in general protest of the corporatization of the university. That night of action had a particular urgency to it. Rightfully so: if Occupy was an interrogation of economic injustice, and the power of the "one percent," it was in essence a criticism of the egregious global power imbalance that Harvard helps maintain.

That power, as well as Harvard's global influence, were dissected intricately in the 2011 film *Veritas$: Everybody Loves Harvard*, directed by activist, writer and filmmaker Shin Eun-jung—a human rights advocate whose lifelong dedication to justice was engrained in her after the 1980 uprising in her hometown, Gwangju, South Korea. The film has now been adapted into a book, published by PM Press in September, with an adjusted title: *Verita$: Harvard's Hidden History*. Eun-jung paints Harvard as not just a university, but "a training ground for American political, economic, and military elites, as well as a cornerstone of the military-industrial-educational complex that has long initiated U.S. wars and political interventions all over the world." The results are revealing.

A book about Harvard's power is in effect a book about the most powerful individuals in the world. In 200 pages, Eun-jung picks apart the ways Harvard is tied to the government, the military, neoliberalism, big bankers, corporate interests, and the national security elite—both through the direct inner-workings of Harvard itself, as an institution, and through the inter-connected work of Harvard alumni around the world.

Gathering previously penned studies and through interviews of her own with academics and professors including Noam Chomsky, the author reminds us in great detail of the university's most disturbing historical moments: the professors at Harvard who dedicated research to proving white supremacy through the 1800s; the Harvard scientists who impacted Nazi Germany's race theories. The author details the difficulties that women and people of color faced over the years to gain more representation at the university, as well as the institution's overtly classist tendencies, like when Harvard provided credit to students who worked as strikebreakers during workers strikes in the early 1900s. Of course, today Harvard is a more inclusive place, but "these changes didn't happen automatically but because people struggled and fought continually from inside and outside Harvard," writes Eun-jung, ultimately remaining optimistic about the university's potential to continue changing for the better.

The book sheds light on the realities of "The Harvard Corporation," the university's principle governing body and its historical ties with big money, from formative 19th century financial influence of the J.P. Morgan and Rockefeller familes, to the current corporation member's ties with major players in U.S. capitalism. For example, Eun-jung draws from research done by HarvardWatch, a group of students and graduates, to expose the close relationships between the Harvard Corporation, the Harvard Management Company (which manages the university's endowment), Enron, the Bush and Clinton administrations, and Harvard's Electric Policy Group (part of the Kennedy School's Center for Business and Government).

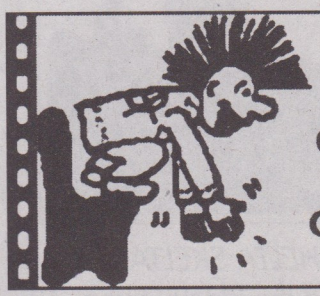
Verita$ highlights Harvard's close relationship with the U.S. government and influence on U.S. foreign policy, the way state-sponsored research changed universities after World War II, the expanding role of intellect in the military industrial complex, and the ways that Harvard has historically worked closely with the CIA and FBI. There are sections dedicated to negative impacts Harvard has had around the world, from the mismanagement of Russian economic reform (see: *The Nation's* 1998 cover story, "The Harvard Boys Do Russia: How the best and the brightest helped destroy the Russian economy") to its destruction of Boston's Allston-Brighton neighborhood, where it has sloppily tried to expand over the years.

While making my way through the book, I kept circling around this thought: is Harvard a reflection of the world it exists within, or has Harvard created that world? But by the end of *Verita$*, the answer seemed grossly obvious. Many of the points brought up within *Verita$* are not specific to Harvard, but rather a lens through which to consider the state of higher education more generally. But considering Harvard's massive amount of wealth and prestige, its influence is unparalleled. Harvard's endowment is over 36 billion dollars, bigger than some small countries, and the largest endowment of any university in the world. It's "commonly called the West Point of U.S. capitalism," writes John Trumpbour, editor of the 1989 book *How Harvard Rules*, in the introduction to *Verita$*, also calling Harvard a "service station for the American ruling class."

It should, of course, be noted that there are tons of hardworking, forward-thinking individuals operating within academia, and at Harvard, fully aware of the many complications implicated within, pushing to open space for progressive ideas and to take power. These efforts are not unrecognized: Eun-jung dedicates much of the book to the history of radical protest and student occupations at Harvard, from the 1960s anti-war movement to the 2001 struggle for living wage and against the school's unfair labor practices, tracing up to 2011 and outlining the discussion at an Occupy Harvard teach-in topics. It's full of interesting bits of history, like the *How Harvard Rules* pamphlet published by students in 1969, uncovering the ways the university had been closely working with the CIA. For all of the alarming histories of oppression and ideological warfare, the second half of the book doubles as a history of student opposition at Harvard—equally crucial stories, beams of light and rage in an otherwise complicated and problematic history.

—Liz Pelly

MOVIES



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

WE'RE NOT THE FIRST, I HOPE WE'RE NOT THE LAST

Lately I have been pondering the people, things, events, places, etc. that have influenced my evolution as a person. In larger sense how society as a whole has developed over my lifetime. I guess that's a side effect of growing old. (And also the result of watching too many punk documentaries and reading too many non-fiction books.) The documentary **Salad Days: A Decade Of Punk In Washington, DC (1980-1990)** looks into how the environment of the city shaped the punk scene that developed there.

As a kid I was into Dischord Records and the DC bands. Even though I lived in Quincy, MA for most of the '80s I was fortunate to see many of the bands play in Boston. Did it have an influence on me? Probably. Watching **Salad Days: A Decade Of Punk In Washington, DC (1980-1990)** confirmed that it is still inspirational.

Focusing on a single decade allows **Salad Days: A Decade Of Punk In Washington, DC (1980-1990)** to narrow the scope of Washington, DC punk to mostly Dischord Records and the bands that orbited the label. Bad Brains had left for New York and Riot Grrrl has yet to happen. The focus of the film is on teenage hardcore and twenty-something emo. I am sure that is frustrating for any '80s band that wasn't on Dischord. There is a bit of complaining, but not much delving into any ancillary parts of the scene.

Salad Days: A Decade Of Punk In Washington, DC (1980-1990) has a tendency to veer into the Ian MacKaye story. It is understandable. He comes across as articulate and outspoken. Fortunately he also keeps his own ego in check. He is accused of taking over the scene, something that makes him laugh. He didn't want to run the scene, he just wanted there to be a scene. It's hard to argue with his logic. If no one else is going to do it, do it yourself. MacKaye took that philosophy to heart.

I am amused that MacKaye was really into having meetings. 9:30 Club manager Dody DiSanto recalls when she first started booking punk shows MacKaye wanted to have a meeting regarding all-ages shows. MacKaye also insisted on a meeting with the other members of Minor Threat when they left him a note that they were breaking up the band. Brian Baker adds, "Our demands were that we wanted to be a more commercially viable band." That wasn't acceptable and the band broke up.

Of course, there is discussion of straightedge. It is the part of MacKaye's legacy he will probably never be able to control. Recalling his pre-punk high school days, MacKaye says, "They called me The Group Conscience." There are probably many people who still do. In fact, MacKaye claims he still gets crank calls from people giving him a hard time about being straightedge.

Is the DC punk scene the most successful in punk? **Salad Days: A Decade Of Punk In Washington, DC (1980-1990)** makes a good case. It seems the most sustainable. While most scenes have succumbed to infighting and shady label dealings, the DC scene retains a semblance of idealism and innocence. (saladdaysdoc.com)

I know there are people who like to listen to other people talk about records. I hang out with a bunch of them. I can and will talk records. Yet, I am still at a loss as to why this was a good idea for a documentary. **Records Collecting Dust** interviews semi-famous musicians and music related folks about records. There is no story. It is just a bunch of men and two women talking about their records.

There are four parts to **Records Collecting Dust**. What was your first record? Where do/did you buy your records? What was the last record you bought? What are the five records you couldn't do without? Humorously no one wanted to answer that last one so there is a montage of the interviewees stumbling over attempts at an answer. It's kind of funny. The rest is your standard stuff.

Records Collecting Dust includes interviews with Jello Biafra, Keith Morris, Mike Watt, Chuck Dukowski, David Yow, Howie Pyro, Dave Markey, Tom Flynn, Steve Tupper and many more. They all start to blur after a while. The majority of interviewees like Led Zeppelin, KISS and Black Sabbath. I am not sure that is a revelation.

The only refreshing interviewee is Kira Roessler who states that she doesn't buy records. Her involvement in music is to play it. She jokes about hating going to record stores. She doesn't like to shop. She goes in and gets what she wants then leaves. The men she toured with always wanted to go record stores and shop. Roessler snidely suggests that perhaps that female stereotype isn't true. Maybe if **Records Collecting Dust** had more female or a wider variety of contributors they could have got some more interesting stuff like this.

Inexplicably there are full song performances from Jello Biafra and the Guantanamo School Of Medicine and the Locust randomly mixed in. This makes no sense. It is out of place and distracts from the flow of the film. The DVD also contains deleted scenes, an interview with director Jason Blackmore, outtakes and extra live footage.

I will mention that when asked what the most recent record bought was, not one person mentioned a new band. Maybe rock stars' recording buying isn't the best inspiration after all. (recordscollectingdust.com)

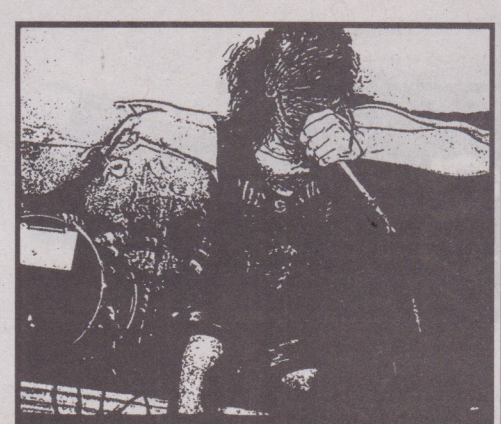
Female boxing made its Olympic debut in 2012. The middleweight gold medal winner was Claressa Shields, a teenager from Flint, MI. **T-Rex** is a documentary that follows Shields as she prepares for that championship.

Being a teenager is stressful enough. Imagine having to figure out life while trying to also win a gold medal. Shields has a good attitude. She knows what she wants and she is going to get it. You want her to get it. She is confident and cocky, but not in a masculine way. When she wins the gold medal, she goes on The Colbert Report and tells Stephen she likes hitting people. Of course, this comes back to haunt her when looking for endorsements. A publicist tells Shields she cannot say she likes hitting people. Shields stubbornly rolls her eyes at this instruction. I appreciate her honesty.

As a film, **T-Rex** occasionally comes across as condescending toward a poor Black girl from a difficult home life. The beginning is presented like that Cinderella story cliché. If you work hard enough your prince charming will come. Fortunately Shields turns that around. She is the one doing the training and winning the fights. She is determined to bring her family a better life too. If anyone can do it, she can.

T-Rex will air on PBS in 2016. (t-rexthefilm.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, c/o Maximum Rocknroll, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. carolynkeddy.com



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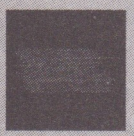

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We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore, etc.—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Releases without vocals or drums will not be considered. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

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(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(AU) Andrew Underwood
(BA) Mike Battleaxe
(CK) Carolyn Keddy
(CR) Camylle Reynolds
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EW) Eli Wald
(FS) Fred Schrunk
(GA) Grace Ambrose
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(RL) Ray Lujan
(RW) Ryan Wells
(RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(SZ) Shit Zoo
(WB) Will Blomquist
(WN) Robert Collins

ACOUSMA – "Move Mountains" EP

Evidently, this band does not have Bob from DROP-DEAD on vocals, though I had to check to be sure, because they sound damn near identical, though the often-elongated vocal phrasing also brings Shaun from COLD SWEAT to mind. This band plays great hardcore that's huge, dark, bleak, and abrasive, and while they write inventive riffs, none of them really stick in my head. This record ends up riding far more on mood than hooks. The exception is the final song, which opens with an eerie picked guitar part over static, though this is not really expanded on after the first few seconds. I guess this band broke up, which is a bummer, as I bet they were good live. (DG)
(High Fashion Industries)

AMATEUR DRUNKS / CHINESE BURNS UNIT – split LP

When the needle hits the record on the CHINESE BURN UNITS side, it's immediately apparent that you are in for some "melodic punk rock." Not to be confused with Fest-y dudes, or wimpy, soul-searching whiners, these Sydney dinks would have fit nicely alongside the DOUGHBOYS, SNFU, or maybe even the HARDONS on a poorly aged mixtape. There's a super weird, faux tough guy hardcore song about a frightful swimming lesson that doesn't fit in at all with the rest of the mix, but for the most part, it's kinda tight. On the flipside, AMATEUR DRUNKS play fairly predictable, if not charming, sloppy pop punk. The phrasing of the lyrics are so strange, I can't tell if the vocalist is simply not a native English speaker, or just whacked out of his mind. I already said "charming" right? That wasn't too incredibly condescending, was it? OK, good. (DZ)
(Consume)

ANTHRAX / PEDAGREE SKUM / DOG SHITE / SLUG – split 7"

A four way split…can't this be considered a comp? Anyways anarcho-punk band ANTHRAX released this on their label and start it off with a bouncy and ska-ish song which is reminiscent of CITIZEN FISH. It's still political and punk but this new turn (a far cry from *Capitalism is Cannibalism*) is not one I am in favor of. Up next is PEDAGREE SKUM, melodic vocals and mid-tempo distorted guitar, probably the only song that sticks out on this comp. DOG SHITE demonstrate for us what DIE ANTWOORD would sound like if they joined CULTURE SHOCK. Like, LINKIN PARK is funny but this is just a case of vicarious embarrassment. SLUG end this with what sounds like a cover of later CONFLICT, decent. Overall, I still wouldn't fuck with this record. File it next to RUBELLA BALLET's *Planet Punk*. (AP)
(Grow Your Own)

ANTI-CORPOS – "Forma Práctica De Luta" EP

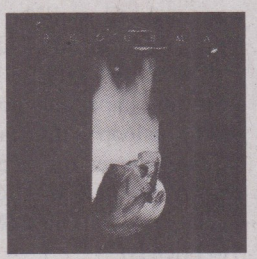
So far beyond fierce, this São Paulo outfit takes energetic hardcore to new heights with eight tracks of pure rage. There's nothing that I want that isn't here: they address real life in their lyrics, they aren't afraid to get weird, they are fast, the vocals are pushed to the very edge for the entirety, they are fast *(I know I said that already, but it's really fast)*, the songs are interesting and the presentation is engaging. I want to sit with this record for hours, I do not want to move on to the next one…it's that kind of record, and those don't come along very often, especially in hardcore. Female-fronted and unabashedly feminist hardcore punk, ANTI-CORPOS make me want to destroy absolutely everything. (WN)
(Emancypunk / No Gods No Masters)

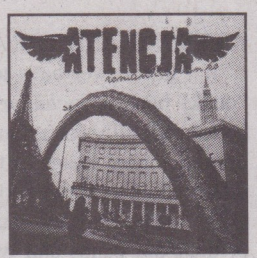
L'ASSASSINS – "Fire of Love / Liar"

The all-female L'ASSASSINS put down a couple of real garagey rock'n'roll numbers here. Straightforward and mid-tempo, both tracks also have a certain twangy surfy element to them. I appreciate the here-and-there organ, but I find the production just a little too slick for my taste. Still, lots of guitars and drums for you rock'n'roll junkies. It looks like it's limited to 500 on vinyl. (KK)
(Piñata)

ATENCIA – "Romantik Punko" CD

On a purely superficial level, I think the Polish language might be more suited to punk than any other. A perfect combination of aggression and melody exists in the language itself, so it makes sense. The vocals are the highlight of this collection of ATENCIA tracks spanning '05–'13, infectious Eastern European hardcore punk with





power in every aspect of the delivery. INNOXIA CORPORA meets LA FRACTION? I don't know how to describe this brand of bare bones guitar-driven punk rock, but I fukkn love it. (WN)
(No Pasaran / Underground Factory)

AUSMUTEANTS / LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – split flexi EP

The two bands *du jour*, no? This bendable neon-green Jell-O mold containing playable grooves comes tucked inside the inaugural issue of *No Friends,* a new imprint with ancient *MRR* ties. I'm gonna go out on a limb and say the print run is gonna sell out thanks to the inclusion of this pup. Now then: both LUMPY tunes add a now-essential throb to their already-potent punk puking. The fuss is warranted and you'll be convinced by this offering, if not already. AUSMUTEANTS begin with an anti-DUMPERS tune and then accelerate toward impossibly itchy punk that I'm sure will be on loop in my brain a month from now. No false moves for them, either. Split of the year? And it's a flexi? Fuckin' whatever. Gonna go lance my boils now. (MC)
(No Friends)

AWESOME AND THE ASS KICKERS – 10"

If I never ever have to see or hear another "punk" band in *luchador* masks, it would *still* be too painfully soon. One side boasts stand-in drummer Joey Image of the MISFITS, and the other side has Dave Scott of ADRENALINE O.D. on trap kit duty, each playing two covers of their old bands and two AWESOME AND THE ASSKICKERS originals. Do you care yet? Me neither. This is embarrassingly bad. Songs titled "Milky Tits," "Gonorrhea," and "Douchie Man" (about some guy who accidentally goes home with a transperson) kinda let you know what musical direction these guys would love to plod toward. Like SLOPPY SECONDS's even dumber, not-funny-by-any-means, adopted, backwards ass step-cousin. (DZ)
(self-released)

BEEF JERK – "Tragic" LP

You know the cliché about the VELVET UNDERGROUND? That only 500 people bought their records but all of them formed bands. This sounds like one of those bands… Perfect gently sneered out sounds that emanate a post-*Loaded* atmosphere through an Australian lens, with the shimmer and kicks of classic Australian pop (the GO-BETWEENS!) yet also evoking the despondent side of the SAINTS on *Eternally Yours,* particularly on the song "French Dish." The lyrics have a *cinéma vérité* quality, depicting the mundanity and brutality of everyday life, as well as the random joys. It's shuffling, jangly damaged pop with a classical appeal that takes it out of the dull trenches of other current shamblers. It all makes me think of the MODERN LOVERS, with darker undertones. If you dig DICK DIVER or the TWERPS send off for this sucker! (LG)
(Trouble in Mind)

BEYOND PINK – "Against the Universe" LP

Melodic Swedish hardcore that's played a little slower than average. The general D-beat gallop is interspersed with moody metal riffing, the occasional palm-muted mosh part, and ample gang vocals and guitar leads. A lot of the riffs on the first side are good, and often stretch out over four measures, but by the second side they descend into more "epic" cheeseball riffing and soloing. I feel like this is almost there, but I would have liked it a lot more had it been faster with a more powerful delivery. As it is, it's a boring blur. (DG)
(Emancypunx)

BOIDS – "Superbafrango" CD

I was thinking this would be street punk but it's more RAMONES type punk with some twists that go in a SCREECHING WEASEL direction at times. From Montreal, these guys keep it tough and rough attitude and production-wise. I wasn't blown away by this, but I bet these guys have rocked a bar or two. (RL)
(Stomp)

BURNT ONES / THE SPACE LADY – split LP

In the last few years, San Francisco legend the SPACE LADY has started breaking out into the larger musical world. She has gone from street musician to playing proper venues. Coming across her performing on the street while coming or going will always be my favorite way to hear her perform, but I am also very happy for another record. On this one she has three covers and one original of her Casio-accompanied ethereal vocal songs. The sound is so light, otherworldly and inimitable. I could do without a cover of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" even if it has been in her set for decades; the SPACE LADY makes it sound beautifully weird. BURNT ONES are a complementary band for the SPACE LADY. They play a similar style of slow, spaced-out keyboard rock. The male vocals however are pretty straightforward. They do a cover the SPACE LADY's "Synthesize Me." (CK)
(Castle Face)

CALM THE FIRE – "Doomed From the Start" CD

Down-tuned, crunchy metallic hardcore that's heavy on the blastbeats, breakdowns, and Swedish metal harmonics. I often don't like this sort of thing because it's too polished and professional-sounding, but here the recording is big-sounding yet rough, and while the band is tight, subtle misfires like the occasional botched drum fill keep it punk. Most of the CD is a satisfying not-quite-top-speed pounding hardcore pace, and the riff-writing holds my attention the whole way through. Would headbang to this band live. (DG)
(Antena Krzyku)

CENTURY PALM – "Valley Cyan/Accept"

The second single in as many months that we've gotten from this new Canadian band comes courtesy of Deranged, who went all out and printed their one-sheet on linen paper stock. I took a quick glance at the write-up before putting this on, and for a second thought the band names of the former projects of CENTURY PALM's members were obscure island chains in the mid-Atlantic. The A-side starts out with a kind of island feel, a promisingly vague and wobbly melody that wouldn't be too far off on a record by the CHILLS or the CLEAN. By the middle of the song though the mix settles into a modernist post-punk mold, complete with WIRE's *154* guitar tone. I prefer the first 25 seconds, but there's something for everyone here. If you like saxophones (I do), there are plenty of them on the B-side. (EW)
(Deranged)

CHROME REVERSE – "Yeah Yeah, We Are…Chrome Reverse" EP

Record of the month! CHROME REVERSE play gritty, '60s-style, punk-y garage rock. The songs are peppy, funny and sung with a badass snarl by French punk legend Lili Zeller. All four songs are written by Zeller including the semi-cover of "Cigarettes and Alcohol." It's that irreverence and attitude that makes this so cool. Plus it sounds really great. (CK)
(Mag Wheels)

THE CLITBOYS – "We Don't Play the Game" EP

Midwestern hardcore punk ditties from suburban Milwaukee, 1983. I've owned the original version of this record many times yet still failed to remember just how cool this really is, in a classic, crude, stop-'n'-start hook-y, '80s thrash way that would be of interest to fans of REBEL TRUTH, STATE, or C.I.A. (JU)
(Beer City)

CONSTRAINT / SICKMARK – split EP

CONSTRAINT start with a pace and a vibe that make me kinda queasy and a heaviness puts it over the edge. But I don't reach for the barf bag, because I feel like they are gonna launch into some West Coast Powerviolence shit (it just *feels* that way, you know?)…and instead they switch to a midtempo dirge that gets even heavier….and *then* they start the PV action. They are tuned so weird, so low; the slowness is more deliberate and torturous than pummeling, like they want you to feel fukkd

up and confused (it's working). Like brutal hardcore organically chopped and screwed—get weird. Germany's SICKMARK have a wild ass act to follow, but two songs in I've completely forgotten what the other side sounded like and I'm trying to follow this erratic start/stop HC/PV/grind madness. Breaks, feedback, stomps…all with a meaty growl that will stir your soul. This record is like an actual time warp, and it makes me want a time machine. (WN)
(Nerve Altar / Rope Or Guillotine)

DARK MATTER – "Blank Faces" EP

They've got "dark" in their name and I have to say they don't disappoint. This is some gloomy post-punk out of Copenhagen, which is bubbling with new bands right now. The deep, clear, melodic vocals (think TERRIBLE FEELINGS) immediately stand out and all four well-crafted songs easily stick in your mind. The bass plunges and plods along, and the catchy guitars soar, while the dynamic drums and hyper-melodic vocals charge the songs forward with an urgency that gives this some edge, especially on "Obsolete" and "Nothing," the two standout tracks. The lyrics are glum as fuck: "*I'd rather stay numb, I'd rather be alone, than feel, nothing at all*." Bleak, like grungy closer "The Pain." If you need a record to match your depressed mood, get this. It might not make you feel any better, but it will pull at you broken heartstrings. (LA)
(self-released)

THE DEAD MORTICIANS – "Old Dark House" EP

This trio mixes metal riffs with speedy DEAD KENNEDYS-style vocals. It's odd but it somehow works. The riffs are very thrash metal related but without the flash and the lyrics and titles are all horror based (right in time for Halloween!). "Old Dark House" has sections that remind me of CRUMBSUCKERS which is always a good thing. On the B-side they go in a similar direction with more of the chunky metal riffs and wailing guitars (which on "Ghost Town" sound a fuck of a lot like *Kill 'Em All*-era METALLICA or if you wanna get real nerdy, the first MORTAL SIN album) but again more of those punk vocals. This band is doing something crossover-ish without many of the obvious trappings. (JD)
(Burial Vault)

DEPARTMENTSTORE SANTAS – "At The Medieval Castle Nineteen 100-Year Lifetimes Since" LP

Fantastic otherworldly sounds from San Diego in the early '80s! Apparently this was recorded in a bedroom in 1984 by a esoteric pop genius called Joseph D'Angelo with some help with his friends using a Toys R Us guitar and other instruments from junk stores and toy stores. It has a sense of adventure, disrupting and upholding the pop ideal with the coolness and surety of the HOMOSEXUALS / SWELL MAPS / TELEVISION PERSONALITIES. Strange bedroom soundtracks that each contain a separate world to explore! From driving pop to joke bossanova to SYD BARRETT-esque incantations…this is a wild, beautiful and necessary reissue! Buy or die. (LG)
(Superior Viaduct)

DIE NASTY – "Take a Ride" CD

This is some rollin' bar punk rawk, with touches of street punk, grunge, surf and rockabilly thrown in for good measure, fronted by two ladies well versed in rocking out and not giving a fuck. Shades of the CRAMPS, MISFITS, MOTÖRHEAD, NEW YORK DOLLS, RAMONES and DEAD BOYS are thrown into the mix. It's well executed and I'll say the guitarist is tight, but the formula is well tested. If the titles weren't suggestive enough ("Rehab," "I'm High," "Opening Band" and "I Don't Wanna Play With Your Kids") then the lyrics confirm these songs as memoirs of degeneracy and hedonism, sex and drugs and rock'n'roll, as summarized by the only track I half enjoyed, "I Like What I Like." Most punks will hate this but the bar rockers might not. (LA)
(self-released)

DISGUSTI – "A Thousand Prickly Needles" EP

Taken at face value, this EP fits pretty neatly into the modern "raw punk" box, complete with squalling feedback, reverb on the vocals and the requisite sloppy hand-drawn art, but beneath the surface lurks a far more interesting beast. For one thing, DISGUSTI definitely draw from a deeper pool of influences than Bristol '81/Kuyushu '83, as their flailing, frenetic pace and loose performance provides more than a hint of WRETCHED/early NEGAZIONE flavor. The song "Wendigo" is particularly compelling, both for its pounding half-time breaks and its thoughtful and frankly heartbreaking lyrics about the epidemic of disappearing Canadian First Nations women and the indifference of the public to the same. Few bands playing this style have anything terribly substantive to say, and it's very refreshing to look at a lyric sheet that actually offers up an interesting perspective. An intro and four songs fly by in well less than frantic ten minutes, and definitely leave the listener wanting more. (AU)
(High Fashion Industries)

DON GATTO – "Sawbotage" CD

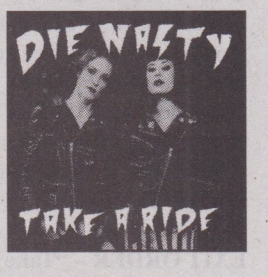
Tough Hungarian hardcore. You can call tracks like "For the Friendship For the Fun" corny if you like, and for sure this whole disc is too slick and overproduced for my tastes, but "No Turning Back" is pure metalcore rage and DON GATTO basically don't do anything wrong here. Solid, meaty, heavy, and crazy catchy jams. (WN)
(self-released)

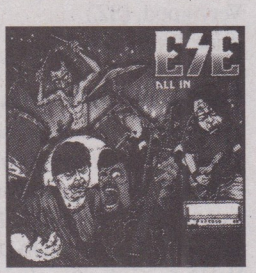
DRX LIGHT – "Electric Life" CD

Kind of weird. No band info / website (other than who plays what) on this disc. And when I resorted to the internet, there's nothing on/about any such band. (Though, there was apparently a "Future Rock" band called DRX who released an album in 2011. Not these chaps.) It's ten blasts of stomping rock/punk, not a million miles away from what was coming out of the UK in the late '70s…WARSAW meets early WIRE. Not short songs by any means, but all the better for it. Whomever they may be. (RK)
(self-released)

EEL – "Fuck Off, The Human Insect" EP

It's no insult to say that EEL have always been primarily a live force, creating a whirlwind of chaos and destruction that levels every room they set foot in. The recordings have been hit or miss, but this is definitely one of the hits. "Noise For Neighbor" might be the best thing they've ever put to tape, CONFUSE-style constant drum





rolls colliding with a vicious central riff, feral vocal and insistent bass line, all capped off with a crazed solo that defines the EEL aesthetic. The DISORDER cover is oddly lethargic and the noise interludes don't add much to the overall quality of the record but still, if you're an EEL agnostic this is a pretty good jumping off point. (AU)
(Beach Impediment)

ESE – "All In" CD

This band is called ESE as in "Hey ese! Don't you know I'm loco?" Driving fast punk with a NINE POUND HAMMER or PORTRAITS OF POVERTY tempo and guitar sound. Vato lyrics and a NAKED RAYGUN cover. Pretty fucking bland. C/s. (RO)
(Sudden Death)

EXIT ORDER – "Take the Bait" EP

Well, shit. First time I listened through I couldn't believe they managed to fit all of it onto a 7"—there are eight songs, but it doesn't feel crowded or rushed, just unrepentantly relentless with never a dull or overused part. Every instrument holds their own, but the vocals stand out as first among equals. EXIT ORDER sound like an anarcho-tinged hardcore VICE SQUAD, which actually is as fucking good as it sounds. "Dog" is my favorite I think, but then you could play me any track here and I'd probably be inclined to change my mind. Arghh. Very good. (SZ)
(Side Two)

THE FACTION – "Destroys O.C." LP

What the fuck year is it?! This is a live behind the orange curtain reunion for skater legend (and selling point for this band) Steve Caballero's 50th birthday. I was always more of a fan of LOS OLVIDADOS and DRUNK INJUNS from the San Jo crew. FACTION's vocals bugged me and their lyrics were too silly ("Let's Go Get Cokes"). Shit. I'll take RIBZY or any of the other bands from that scene over these guys. What the fuck do I know though? A million aged skaters with creaky bones would protest. I couldn't skate worth a shit anyway. For the fans, all the hits are here and played competently but with a beefier guitar sound that I don't care for at all. The vocals suffer the test of time the worst, having gone through puberty, zits and all, long ago. Still, with good songs like "Lost in Space," "I Decide For Me" and the ultra-PC "Tongue Like a Battering Ram" this will catch air more than a face plant with longtime followers. Support your local Jaks Team! (RO)
(Beer City)

THE FARTING ARSES / THE SKUN KNEES – split EP

Can't find out much about either of these bands. I think they're both Australian. FARTING ARSES play thuggy, Neanderthal punk that's as subtle as a 2x4 to the face. Distorted, simplistic, near perfect. SKUN KNEES play quirky metallic hardcore with elements of powerviolence. Interesting split. (AM)
(Consume)

FAST ASLEEP – "Outside the Fence" EP

FAST ASLEEP is spastic fastcore powerviolence with hints of crust and thrash. Think INFEST, CAPITALIST CASUALTIES and DISCORDANCE AXIS. Their lyrics are sadistic and despicable toward all the waking hours, written in an esoteric haiku fashion. *Outside The Fence* features lots of pit hits for the windmill cartwheel set. Really digging the overall tone of the recording: deep and heavy, with percussion at a piccolo snare pitch. Maybe it is a piccolo snare, I don't know. Very cool artwork, black and white graveyard drawing. The mucus and biological hand remind me of Arik Roper's finest stuff. (JR)
(Deep Six)

FEVERS – "Febriphobia" EP

Chaotic outsider hardcore/grind with clean guitars and monotonous kinda whiny vocals that defy the constant erratic bursts of noise. The only times these kids seem to settle into a beat is when the guitars *(and it sounds like there are nine of them)* just ring out; any time there are riffs the whole thing is a chaotic mess (that's how they planned it). Equal parts MOHINDER and a modern DIY/emo/tech/grind sound that I am not actually familiar with, but that I'm sure exists…difficult to digest but ultimately rewarding. (WN)
(self-released)

FILIAMOTSA – "Like It Is" CD

On *Like It Is*, the French avant rock octet (maybe a quintet, maybe a duo; I lost the original one-sheet and the online EPK isn't very well translated) backs GW Sok from the EX. I haven't listened to the new PROTOMARTYR record yet but I imagine that the one they make next will sound like this. I was kind of hoping that Sok would use the instrumentation available here (guitar, drums, synthesizers, sax, trombone, strings) and push this into some wild SCOTT WALKER post-*Climate of Hunter* territory, but there are too many tracks with a standard rock feel for the music to get that unsettling. Instead the vibe veers closer to the soundtrack for the kind of action movie that might be too arty for a Father's Day outing or too tense for "Netflix and Chill." Sok's vocals here are pretty cool, at once self-aware and –indulgent, veering out of the blunt and slightly hammy *Sprechstimme* and mimicking the throb of the backing band at times. Not the punkest record we've received this month. I realize that this hasn't been a productive review for any of us, but unfortunately you are reading *Maximum Rocknroll*, not *The Wire*. (EW)
(Aagoo)

FLOWERS OF EVIL – 12"

Debut offering from this new NYC band. An ear-catching outing to be sure, particularly in its focus on fusing classic GERMS drain-circling with now-sound art scratch. The unabashed retro leanings are immediately recognizable, but not a deal-breaker. Things sound slicker than I'd like at times, but the darkness heard throughout rescues things at every close call. Decent first offering…Can ya follow it up with a hot shit 45? Pretty please? (MC)
(Deranged)

THE FRESH & ONLYS – "Early Years Anthology" LP

It sort of kills me when bands that have only achieved moderate success put out records with titles like this. It kind of makes me think they take themselves just a little too seriously. On the other hand, why shouldn't a band take themselves seriously? All that said, this is a pretty damn good record. It's garagey and psychedelic and poppy and has a certain ethereal quality. It's also pretty intense. At times it's slow and methodical. Other times, they really pick up the pace. This really is just an excellent record. (KK)
(Castle Face)

F.Y.P.M. – "Public Disgrace" LP

There was something familiar about this so I had to use the dreaded lazy tool, the internet, when listening to it. F.Y.P.M. stands for FUCK YOU PAY ME and is one of my favorite band names ever. I'm outta touch enough to not know that this is their second album and that it features members of Cleveland legends GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS and NINE SHOCKS TERROR. You wouldn't be surprised from listening to this but all the Japanese or other non 'Merican hardcore influences are gone. This is ham-fisted Midwestern hardcore with *War All The Time*-era POISON IDEA guitar licks. My only complaint is Tony Erba's vocals are a little too clear and up front for me but that's a small price to pay for classics like "Jesus Loves You (Everybody Else Thinks You're an Asshole)" and "Pro Gear, Pro Attitude." I guess I'm supposed to say something like "Cleveland Rocks" here. Eat me. (RO)
(Deep Six)

GHETTO GHOULS – "Collisions" LP

Is there no end to the copious amounts of Texas scree permeating the bins in recent years? G'damn people. GHETO GHOULS coat their abrasions in nougat though, so it's not an ugly pain. *Collisions* is a collection of

completely jagged fragments, some sounding (gasp!) complex and wise, others (more!) sounding damaged. There's a boundless energy to the album and my middle-aged ass is sweating profusely at the end of each side. "Hezbollah", the album's most stretched-out entry, is the finest though. Perhaps they should breathe. Still, the kids want info instantly and this band obliges. Where's my easy chair and dish of hard candy? (MC)
(Monofonus Press)

G.L.O.S.S. – "Girls Living Outside Society's Shit" EP

This exists perfectly as a solid hardcore record, nothing necessarily freaky or weird just excellently solid but a thing that makes it stand out (other than the context it exists in) is that you can hear all of the lyrics. No reading along with lyric sheets necessary—somehow, at breakneck speed Sadie manages to enunciate every word. A thing that is always rough to me about hardcore is all the vocals garbled and barked until I kind of just feel like some angry man is yelling at me. And what Sadie is singing about is so integral and important it's just really fucking cool to just hear every lyric. This record delves into politics in a way that avoids being exclusionary or preachy but instead is filled with rage and love and an overall we're-in-this-togetherness. It also comes with an excellent zine that furthers the aesthetic and message. (MM)
(Nervous Nelly / Total Negativity)

GORGONOISID – LP

This German band describes themselves as a "SCARY NOISEROCKMONSTER [sic] FROM HELL." While this has elements of the so-called "noise-rock," it is, let us just say, more early '00s than late '80s. The main problem here is that the metal starts to creep in and stink up the joint. A prime example would be the song entitled "The Return of the Nuclear Summer" that literally bastardizes a SLAYER riff. It also has a "groove" to it that managed to coax my acid reflux back from remission. Speaking of stomach related fluids, there is a really funny moment when the vocals are sputtered and gurgled forth onto the microphone. I will assume this is to indicate the channeling of some kind of psychotic, primitive man-beast. Scary...indeed. (JK)
(Meta Matter)

HEAT DUST – LP

It's difficult for me to find a reference point to grasp on to here. It kind of sounds like what you get when a modern emocore band (like I imagine the bands pictured in *Alternative Press* sound like) gets influenced by early CURE or KILLING JOKE. In other words: chorus pedals. I get what they're going for, and they are certainly good at it—the recording sounds huge. Definitely music for vegans with gauges and sleeve tattoos. (AM)
(The Flenser)

HEX – "Poison In The System: The Demos" CD

If you liked your punk, the UK in the early to mid '80s was a good place to be. Not only were all kinds of genres flourishing within said rubric, but there was a significant community of like-minded souls, putting on gigs, writing (and distributing) fanzines, (cassette) tape labels, and whatnot. It meant that bands could (and did!) release demos, on cassette, and distribute them far and wide. The anarcho-punk "scene," spawned by the likes of CRASS and their progeny (SUBHUMANS, CONFLICT, FLUX OF PINK INDIANS, MOB, et al.) were the inspiration and incubator for HEX. Hailing from the Northeast of England, they were part and parcel of the legendary (well, to us folks, anyways) Sunderland Bunker, a venue, and musicians collective. Herein you'll find four demos tapes (fourteen tracks in all), recorded in 1986 and 1987. A variety of musical styles, evocative of KILLING JOKE, ANTISECT, and the FAMOUS IMPOSTERS grace the demos. It all features the music gifts of Dickie Hammond and Dave Lainey, better known for playing in HDQ and later LEATHERFACE. Really great stuff all round, and some excellent liner notes do a superb job of capturing the sense of community, and possibility that was nurtured by the scene. (RK)
(Boss Tuneage)

HIEROPHANTS – "Parallax Error" LP

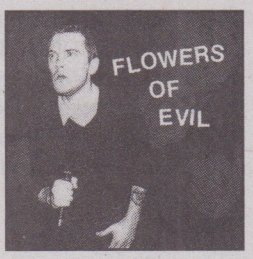
Gleeful surreal garage pop-psyche with a lyric about watching Ben Wallers (COUNTRY TEASERS) change. Or did I mishear that??! At any rate, sharp guitar licks, Australian accents, catchy waver tendencies, clean production, a sense of humor, members of AUSMUTEANTS... This is a cool record, and if they aren't already I think this band is gonna be super popular. They write fun, catchy but black humored pop songs that would be fun to rot your brains out to, that sort of sound like when the FALL cover '60s garage songs. I can't see myself reaching for this in my final hour or anything, but maybe you will! (LG)
(Aarght / Goner)

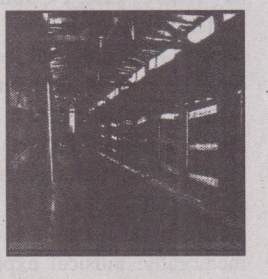
HOLDER'S SCAR – "Sin Without Doubt" EP

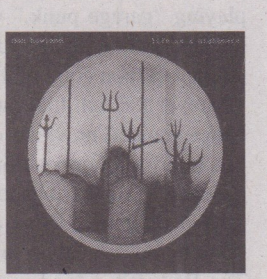
The debut EP from this North Carolina hardcore band is a little hard to pin down exactly, but is well worth your time. The musical aesthetic is raw, pounding US hardcore. The songs draw from different subgenres, though I mostly hear late '80s/early '90s crusty hardcore, along with early '80s USHC, and subtle hints of metal and hard rock. It could be the North Carolina connection, but I do hear hints of CORROSION OF CONFORMITY, and the title track's main riff brings the first DOUBLE NEGATIVE LP to mind. The vocals are more shouted than all-out harsh, and the guitar tone is on the thin side and relatively lacking in treble. A little speed is traded in for power, and it works well. The periodic breakdowns kind of give this record away as a product of 2015 and kill the buzz, but I'll give it a pass. (DG)
(To Live A Lie)

DON HOWLAND – "Life Is a Nightmare" LP

Let's be frank: I was listening to this thing on the *MRR* Company Headphones™ and round about, ohhh, track four I got out my phone and ordered a copy for delivery to home base. There's them records that start off with the *right* echo on the vocals, the *right* fuzz on the guitar, the *right* drum sound, and finally, perfect sequencing so you know you're turning a future repeat player over in your tacky mitts. The final indicator was scanning over the promo insert to determine if this was originally some cassette-only obscuro from 1986 only sold on GIBSON BROS tours; nope, recorded over the past few years.







That's actually a thrilling discovery. Ladies and gentlemen, DON HOWLAND has been shitting out this quality Americana-infused psych-punk-blues for decades now, and every once in awhile he absolutely gut-punches the competition. Here's another haymaker, so steel yr guts. (RW)
(12XU)

HUNCHES – "You'll Never Get Away With My Heart / Like I Could Die"

The HUNCHES, if you are unfamiliar, were a Portland punk rock band that's been dead, dead, dead, for over five years now. They used to do that to their audiences you know, knock 'em dead. They had this front guy, Chris Gunn, who could make a show feel dangerous in a fulfilling way, like you risked acquiring a truly noble scar encountering a genuinely memorable musical experience. During their existence they were generally categorized as playing "garage punk," which was how most people used to qualify punk rock that wasn't a straight carbon copy of 1984 thrash: "garage," whatever the hell that meant. People are a lot better situated now, it's come full circle back to a mindset in opposition to hardcore-dogma-adherence, thanks to bands like the HUNCHES getting their retroactive cred. This 7" is their 2001 demo, predating any of their LPs on In The Red. It's a loud, punishing, art-blues inflected punk rock record with Gunn's tortured vocals at the front of the mix, and it would sit in your 7" pile of early '00s-era singles the same way that a FLESHEATERS record parks comfortably with Dangerhouse titles. 'Cause they're all flying at you from Planet Shit. They may talk different, but they are all talking *shit*. Buy this or rot in fetid ignorance. (RW)
(Almost Ready)

IMMOLATO TOMATOES – "Stumbling Block Complete Recordings 1986–88" CD

A retro release from Boss Tuneage here. The guys were around in the UK during the said years and sound very American. Monotone songs that sound MINOR THREAT and SEVEN SECONDS influenced but this band does branch out from the hardcore thing. Under produced, this is very 1983 sounding with dabblings in the SST sound as well. I can't say I loved this considering there were lots of bands doing this by the mid '80s but being that these guys were British and not doing leather and spikes makes this a little interesting. (RL)
(Boss Tuneage)

INSPIRE – "Demo '98" EP

Hardcore is amazing because anyone can do it. You can play to your friends, speak your mind, and foster community. INSPIRE is positive and has an entirely relatable and valuable message. After some "investigative" digging, I found out that INSPIRE featured a lot of members of other important São Paolo bands like POINT OF NO RETURN. This record comes off as good representation of the transitional hardcore scene in Brazil, kinda like how the *Simpsons* shorts on the *Tracy Ullman Show* bridged Matt Groening's *Life Is Hell* comics with the broader *Simpsons* legacy. The members went on to be in some awesome bands such as B.U.S.H. and O INIMIGO. INSPIRE has everything that a Youth Crew record should have: the relentlessly positive lyrics, the bouncy bass tone, the crunchy guitars and the heartfelt vocal delivery. But sometimes a record just isn't the sum of its parts. Part of me feels like this would have been better left as a cassette. You can try and sound like BETTER THAN A THOUSAND as much as you want but that doesn't mean it'll happen. All this hemming and hawing on my part doesn't change the fact that someone thought this was important enough to release on wax and if even ten kids who hadn't heard it before buy it, and are stoked, than this record is a success. From the front and back photos of the record, it looks like they were well loved in Brazil, so maybe I'm missing something. I'm getting old. For fans of: Conan O'Brien's "Monorail" *Simpsons* episode, vegan sundaes, and positivity. (MW)
(Refuse / True Spirit)

ISKRA – "Ruins" LP

This is fucking great! These Canadian fuckers blast out some totally legit blackened death metal that any true metal freak would drool over, but instead of blood and evil they offer a deadly serious anarchist perspective in their lyrics, and a twenty page booklet with explanations and analysis. The music and literature complement each other very nicely in my opinion. Metal purists need not worry, though. The thorny illegible logo and *Lord of the Rings* cover art keep it hella real. A great record for everyone! (BA)
(Black Raven / Doomed Society / Echoes From Beneath / Nocturnal Reign / Profane Existence / War on Music / What Is Making Us Sick)

THE JACKETS – "Shadows of Sound" CD

This Swiss band has a groovy '60s sound. The music pulsates with fuzz and reverb. The female singer purrs with a bit of bite. The songs are catchy and upbeat. The whole combo is so much fun. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm)

KICK IT – "Biere, Frites et Vandalisme" LP

Fast, early '80s SoCal / NorCal-influenced hardcore outta Germany. I say both SoCal and NorCal as their charging yet melodic tunes come across like T.S.O.L's first album, CIRCLE JERKS, and SOCIAL UNREST. Lyrically they're extremely topical with songs about the current refugee crisis, cops, and overpriced shows. Their song questioning "German values" is sung in Swedish which is a nice twist and a double-dropkick to the Generation Identitare nationalist idiots in both countries. Considering they recorded this in a rehearsal room the production's really good, too. Totally worth your time! Oh yeah, it's on snazzy purple vinyl. (JD)
(Kink)

L. VOAG – "The Way Out" LP + 7"

A *nom de plume* for a member of the HOMOSEXUALS, taking a break from that band's breathlessly non-existent world-wide touring schedule to record an LP as L. VOAG in 1979, with assistance from fellow travelers. This reissue packages both that full-length and the contemporaneous *Move* EP, both of which are in the whacked-out experimental pop mode then being perfected by the parent band: a hallucinatory blend of early '70s psychedelia, 20th century classical snippets, and straight up singalong punk pop *à la mode*. Some of you interested readers can look up the combination brag list / teeth-grinder online called "The Nurse With Wound (NWW) list"; it's that infamous UK outfit's favorite records circa 1979. Buy *this* record instead of that other shitty record you were thinking of buying, drop the needle and if your mind is blown then start working through that fucking list. Just know right now that you will never be able to afford any children or a house if you take it to heart. This record is the ultimate gateway drug. (RW)
(Superior Viaduct)

LÄHTEVÄT KAUKOJUNAT / S&M – split EP

LÄHTEVÄT KAUKOJUNAT, which means "Outgoing Long-distance Trains" (don't you just love language?) pulled me in the second the needle dropped. Instantly 013 come to mind—that epic Finnish band that in 1983 wrote one (and only one) of the best punk records known that side of the Greenwich Meridian line—but that's not to say they don't rise above their influences, which probably also include KOLLAA KESTÄÄ and EPPU NORMAALI. The sound on the instruments is stripped down, the compositions are unfussy and, their second track "Kaikki On Paskaa" (if you've been paying any attention you'll know by now that *paskaa* means "shit" in Finnish) features an acoustic guitar. Don't let that statement fool you though, as it actually sounds pretty darn good strummed beneath the singalong nasally vocals, catchy guitar hooks and hair-raising solo—instant mixtape pick! S&M jump in on the flipside with two tracks that hover between '77 punk and that Holy Trinity of Gloom sound (Umeå–K-town–Portland '00s punk). Catchy, layered guitar work, gritty chorus vocals and upbeat drumming to keep your

head bopping. Both bands have an underlying melancholy to the compositions which I like, and both sing in Finnish, which of course makes this sound great and hella fun to try and sing along to! Ratbite put out last year's excellent MIETTIIN EP and Bad Hair Life is a good go-to label for current Finnish bands, so you know this is *not* gonna be *paskaa*. (LA)
(Bad Hair Life / Bleak Eyes / Ratbite)

LATEX – "Losing Game" EP

Following up last year's self-titled EP, *Losing Game* feels more like a bonus features disc than a sequel, but that's just fine to me. Once again LATEX ably blend UK82 with current US hardcore: some parts remind me directly of the INSANE and ULTRA VIOLENT, but then it turns hard into a modern slam. My only disappointment is that LATEX is so good live that I don't know how they can distill that experience into a recording other than to just push it all into much rawer territory. (SZ)
(Sensual World / World Gone Mad)

LIFES / SUFFERING MIND – split EP

Devastating songs from LIFES, gasping deconstruction under space-core vibes. It sounds like there is a second layer of each audio track on a multiplying filter, blurring and diffusing the edges. There is definitely something weird and spaced out about this grinder. Looping spirals and nobs in the HAL deck. I don't think there is a grand piano on this recording but it sounds like one is being autopsied. SUFFERING MIND excels with insanely tight grindcore that hits like a machine gun and oozes into you like lithium. A bipolar bait and switch with tempo and aggression. All in all, a brutal grind split with experienced artistic accents. (JR)
(Halo of Flies / Here and Now)

L.O.T.I.O.N. – "Digital Control And Man's Obsolescence" LP

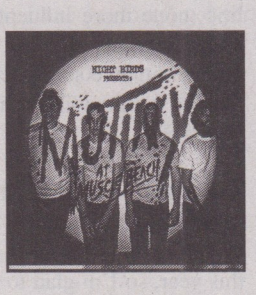
I liked the *Leaders Of Tomorrow Ingest Only Noise* demo from a couple years ago, but getting to see L.O.T.I.O.N. live confirmed my suspicions that more was at work than the tape hiss permitted: waves of noise cresting around a hypnotic barrage of hybrid percussion and repetitive leads, while a ghillie-suited barker stood menacingly in the center. *Digital C.A.M.O.* keeps the noise relatively at bay, but only to emphasize the details that would otherwise be lost. L.O.T.I.O.N. accomplish a level of interplay between EBM and contemporary hardcore punk that I don't think exists anywhere else (nor perhaps could it), at least on this stage and circuit. The aesthetic, both in the artwork and the lyrics, is an amalgam of tropes from both industrial and punk—surveillance and technology, militarized daily life. These tropes have all been thrust to the frontlines of an especially banal American discourse, with NYC often the place-setting to tragedy, so it certainly feels relevant here. Of course there are more explicitly political bands, but L.O.T.I.O.N. manage to express derision and despair on a level different than most others, with syncopation as the key vehicle. On "Torture Report," a song that rattles off a list of approved methods of interrogation, the refrain of "*they do this people*" haunts the gaps in the rhythmic palpitations. It's a different economy of cadence, borrowed from electronic music, that proves very effective at conveying a visceral horror: they do this to people in our name, they do this to people still. L.O.T.I.O.N. is a punk band when push comes to shove, but like EXITHIPPIES with acid house, they seems to come from a sincere, sustained interest in other styles of music. *Digital C.A.M.O.* was one of my most anticipated releases of the year and I was actually planning on disappointment, but I'm comfortably wrong. "2015: What have we got? More wars, more killing ... more disease, more pollution." The real question is whether the obsolescence is an inevitability or a necessity. Probably both. (SZ)
(La Vida Es Un Mus)

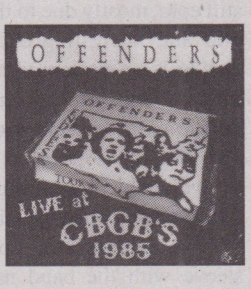
M SECTION – "Eat Your Feelings" EP

Bands in Mexican wrestling masks. Pretty played-out to me. I once met Mil Mascaras at an in-store I helped put on. He wouldn't take off his mask the whole time except to eat in private. Dedication. Don't know if the masks are a regular thing with these Santa Rosa kids but this is some speedy skater punk with wailing dual guitars. The vocals remind me of MODERN ACTION on some songs and there're a couple winners here. Unfortunately, though, there's not enough carne here to keep me interested and some of the musical interludes are just plain wanky. Lose the masks and stay out of Guitar Center for a year, then call me. (RO)
(Sweet Lodge)

MAAILMANLOPPU – "Täältä Tulee Sota" 12"

MAAILMANLOPPU presents an incredibly Northern European affair on more than one front. Ultimately, the music is a deft fusion of hardcore and goth / deathrock that seems to have so much cache in the international punk scene these days mixed with some straight-the-fuck-up BAUHAUS appreciation. The singer has a militaristic bark that is percussive and confrontational in a familiar Finnish / Polish manner. The bass playing is somewhere between David J and Peter Hook in stylistic aims, and, besides the vocals, is the main captivator. The best contemporary comparison is to liken MAAILMANLOPPU to a much more aggressive LOWER. This record succeeds when the band falls into its herky-jerk, stomping Norhtern European groove. At these moments, they sound like they're trying to channel LIAISONS DANGEREUSES through a hardcore style. Their songs have a stiff swagger to them, all jerking shoulders and firmly planted feet. Which I guess makes sense when you have a giant hairdo and 100 pounds of leather and steel between your jacket and your combat boots. These songs fail when it comes time to knuckle down and have a heavy moment, like on the B-side opener "Tanssi." You can feel the band wanting to lay into a dragging breakdown, but, for whatever reason, they forego it. Perhaps that restraint is what has allowed them to so successfully fuse the typically spare style of lagged mid tempo hardcore and traditionally over-indulgent type of goth rock into their own brand of post-punk, but the lingering on the structure of hardcore songs exposes itself as a weakness at these moments. (LP)
(Svart)





MAN IS THE BASTARD – "Bastard Noise: The Lost MITB Sessions" LP

I'm not sure what can still be said about MAN IS THE BASTARD. This slab is four bursts of sound that stand so far apart from the crowd that it's as if they aren't even playing the same game *(they definitely aren't)*. This release shows the Wood / Connell / Beattie lineup handling their by-now-revered-by-all brand of epic powerviolence-meets-jazz driven by sheer bass destruction and the most effortlessly erratic drums you've ever heard. The noise takes over on the third track, which is just Beattie (NO COMMENT, DEAD LANGUAGE) and Wood…but that's just a prelude to the second side. "Long Pig" is a fifteen part opus filled with MITB's trademark sludge, indescribably operatic/orchestral elements, and the homespun power electronics that would carry BASTARD NOISE into another realm. There is seriously no other outfit like this one. None more prolific, none more influential, none so original. Skull Servants Rejoice, this is absolute and unfuckwithable sound, cheers to Deep Six for making it all readily available. (WN)
(Deep Six)

MIETTIIN – "Yksi Miljoonasta / Puoliksi Maan Alla"

I'm already a fan of their EP from earlier this year, so I'm glad to see this band still exists! MIETTIIN's craft is simple but somehow still epic, mostly due to the driving vocal melodies and interesting chord progressions. The A-side is an up-tempo and somber track that took a couple listens to grab me. I had to devote a little extra energy in order to appreciate it. The flip side is easier to digest, and has a cool octave doubled vocal thing going on. It feels a little slapped together since there's no standout track, and no jacket or art. Just a white dust sleeve with the band name stickered on the front, and song titles and label names on back. While I prefer the first EP, I do like these two songs and I'm still a fan. (MA)
(Ratbite / Fuck CD's)

MILK FROM CHELTENHAM – "Triptych of Poisoners" LP

Didn't see this one coming. Hi-fi reissue of 1983 lo-fi (er, ultimately pretty hi-fi) UK DIY shizz from the massive roster of HOMOSEXUALS side side projects. Most memorable to me for its iconic silkscreen cover—yeah, I got the OG on the shelf and shit, couldn't be bothered to actually listen to it. If me wanna hear HOMOS, I just grab that AMOS & SARA double 45 and move on with my life. But if you want to be a kool hip dude(tte) you could actually listen to it. But you might regret it. It's pretty "out" jazzy hands gear, repping the 20th century classical hard. There're prolly like two or three tracks you could DJ with and impress some anti-socialites, and if your life is really interesting and you feel you need a downtown scene soundtrack, this is like totally for you. Or you could always file it on a shelf. (GB)
(Superior Viaduct)

THE MINDLESS SHOW – "Ten Years of Epic Failures: Semi-Discography" CD

As far as I can tell, these folks are Malaysian. This is a collection of various releases—vinyl, CD and cassette—from over the last decade…mostly sung in English, with some in their native tongue. Musically, 'tis a varied bunch. All melodic, and very reminiscent of the more eclectic late '80s US offerings—VICTIMS FAMILY and the like—married with that scrappy, early, anything goes efforts from AGAINST ME! and other denizens of the DIY basement show. Thoroughly enjoyable, with lots of infectious enthusiasm, catchy riffs, and interspersed with enough acoustic and metallic guittaring to keep it all interesting. (RK)
(Piss Art)

LA MISMA – "Kanizadi" LP

This is so perfect just go buy it now—just do it! LA MISMA from New York are a force to be reckoned with and, after just one 7" and a few demos, this ferocious full-length hurtles through the punk universe like a blazing comet! I can't single out one song on this record because the consistency and character—the bite!—is found in *every* song. Each jam packed with pogo power, this is short and fast, heavy and solid, structured but crumbling under the intensity of the execution. A commendable homage to the CRISIS guitar sound, fueled by UK82 punk power and laced with the venom of '80s Italian punk, but never limited or overshadowed by those influences. The guitar mixes creeping hooks and solos with frontal-attack riffs. The hypnotic bass booms and rumbles with the power of a coming earthquake. The stomping, cymbal-crashing drums are crude and commandeering like a primeval instinct. The vocalist spits, squeals and yelps, all passionate Portuguese delivery and transfixing impressionistic lyrical content. The result is spine-chilling, catchy and *driving* all at the same time. The production works around the core sound like a Rubik's cube doing every element justice—the twisting guitar distortion, the bristle and weight of the bass, the dissonance in the vocals, the pitch and punch in the drums. 18 minutes and 53 seconds of white-knuckled, jaw-clenching, hair-raising *energy* that has my mind and body positively ecstatic. Comes with a 28-page booklet and A2 poster designed by the vocalist. For fans of: good fucking music! Exceptional! (LA)
(Toxic State / La Vida Es Un Mus)

MONGOLOID – "Slug Boy" EP

The best part of this record is the side long "At the Moment of Death." It's a mid-tempo mini-epic replete with a dark yet catchy phased guitar and equally haunting saxophone line. That being said, maybe these are the strengths to focus on. (JK)
(Ferai Kid / Media Schlitz)

MÜLLTÜTE – 12"

This fearless Berlin duo has taken on the difficult task of making a 45 RPM 12", and it's a great success! You may recall their chaotic, angry, and jangly hardcore from their two previous EPs on Heartfirst Records and one self-released EP. So the 12" is the next logical step right? Well, only if you can take things up a notch and evolve into the format. There is no shortage of certified MÜLLTÜTE ragers on here, comprised of flying three-chord riffs and rhythmic hooks done only the way they can do it. When I crank this the wind from the speakers is blowing my hair back. It's all stuff I've come to expect from a MÜLLTÜTE release. After raging track number four I'm hit with a wash of static and an incredible but short melodic instrumental interlude, and I put the needle back at the start of it again because it just sounds *so good*. The opening track of the B-side employs a great military-style drumbeat and is probably now one of their best songs ever. The next track features a guest vocalist, only adding to the variety. Then comes the true peak of the record: an unexpected and tense slower track that manages to sound different without losing any of the elements of their other material, and with another guest vocalist who lays down a totally dreamy layer of melody that I never expected. Two more furious blasts close the record and, if you're like me, you flip it over and take the trip all over again. I'm always critical of hardcore bands doing an LP or 12", as I find that they usually contain too much filler and don't hold my attention all the way through. Ahntd and Maak have shown that if you evolve and grow, take some risks, and really believe in what you're doing, it comes across. My favorite hardcore record of the year. (MA)
(self-released)

THE NASTIES – "Discipline" CD

Straight-ahead snotty effort by a bunch of chaps who look like they ought to know better. Old geezers, who still manage to spit and snarl just like the DEAD BOYS, UK SUBS, or dare I say it, early DOA. No surprise that these folks are on DOA's main man's record label. Keeping it simple, and er, keeping it real, I guess. (RK)
(Sudden Death)

NIGHT BIRDS – "Mutiny at Muscle Beach" CD

There's a lot of buzz around this band. I've seen them a couple times and thought they were pretty good. This new full-length is pretty rocking. This is punk without getting hardcore

or pop punk. Definitely a US retro thing going on here that reminds me of West Coast punk à la FEAR and DOA. This is produced but it still packs a decent punch. They do this without sounding just like somebody too. Good stuff. (RL)
(Fat Wreck)

OBAT BATUK – "Tiger Wants 17 Great Folk Songs From Newcastle" LP

Band logo "font" composed entirely of cartoon cocks, pussies and buttholes? Check. Album cover showcasing doctored photo of a tiger exhaling an apparently crucial bong rip? Check. Large poster of tiger/bong anomaly included? Check. So goddamn much going on here that I'm spinning aimlessly, but still smiling. Spiritually and sonically, I'd place this lot square in between STIKKY and the BANANAS, though nowhere near as good as either. Mediocrity aside, I'm going to steal the poster from *MRR* HQ anyway. (MC)
(self-released)

OFFENDERS – "Live at CBGB's 1985" LP

OK. I talked it over with a friend and we really don't need any more live records from "classic" hardcore bands. I feel like, in its true form, hardcore is a contextual music and the live record is a shortsighted attempt at recreating what is inimitable. When does hardcore turn from being a tangible, vibrant, emotive form of music into archival knowledge? When labels decide to put these records out. *Endless Struggle* is up there in the pantheon of amazing '80s records. Every song is a gem, the musicianship is amazing, and the vocals are heartfelt. This live record takes the salient, amazing aspects of their songs and turns them into a Ken Burns-type PBS special. I feel like historians are going to study it (they already are; see *Spray Paint The Walls*, a prime example of PhD type deconstruction) and wax intellectual about how the tape sounds resonating over the *entire* record really add to the grit of Reagan-era HC (or something). I don't know. I can't tell the future. What I can say is, that I'm complaining far too much and that the OFFENDERS are amazing and if you *absolutely love* live tracks, you should probably pick this up. All the songs are great and you can definitely tell that Mikey Offender is probably one of the best bassists of his time, but I would still listen to *We Must Rebel* and *Endless Struggle* first. Always and always: RIP Mikey Offender. For fans of: disappointing your dad, overstaying your welcome, first dates at Wendy's. (MW)
(Beer City)

OPPOSITION RISING – "Riot Starter" EP

OPPOSITION (is) RISING from the long-dead corpse of Boston scumwarts TOXIC NARCOTIC. Trapped on this EP are five tracks of full-throttle, chunky, hardcore that isn't shying away from a mosh feel, but there're plenty of thrashing whips to be found. (JU)
(Pine Hill)

THE PACK – LP

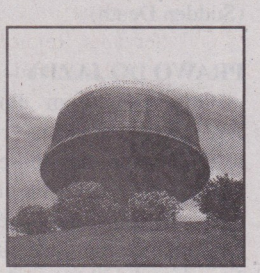
Ugly Pop continues to run the punk reissue game in 2015 with this straight-up reissue of legendary 1978 German punk rock killer. Never really understood how this saw contemporary release in both Italy and Canada, but presumably that got the gears turning for a Canadian re-release. Amazingly, this thing has already seen like five reissues (and boots) on CD and LP through the '90s and '00s—maybe Ugly Pop will be the ones to keep it in print for eternity! For early German punk, this is the top of the heap (tho that's not necessarily saying much). This is definitely what I imagine when I think of Europunk: decrepit zany bar band, drummer in a soiled bathrobe, crazy way-too-old balding longhair singer shouting offensives in broken Engrish. This ain't speed punk; most of this thing plods along in dumb enough fashion, channeling STOOGES more than the PISTOLS or RAMONES. Great stuff if you're not in a hurry. (GB)
(Ugly Pop)

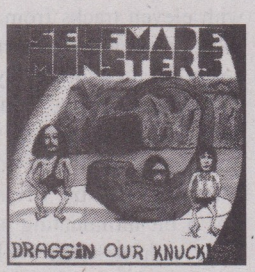
PEARS – "Letters to Memaw" EP

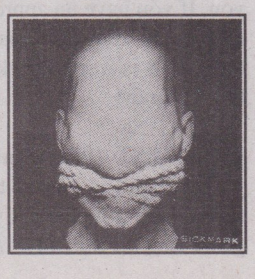
Is your love for PROPAGANDHI's *Today's Empire, Tomorrow's Ashes* equaled only by your undying thirst for tough-guy NYHC? Than this EP was specifically created for you! These fellows from New Orleans reel you in with melodic guitars and well-executed harmonizing back-up vocals, but then seamlessly cross over into brutal hardcore breakdowns. Guaranteed to thrill all the meatheads in the crowd, and create a triumphant circle pit, and all done with the typically polished recording sound associated with Fat Records releases. It should also be noted that these guys are incredibly good at what they do. And if you are an unapologetic fan of Fat Records (or if you're wearing a LEFTOVER CRACK shirt right now) this band will rock your world. (FS)
(Fat Wreck)

PLEASURE LEFTISTS – "The Woods of Heaven" LP

This record probably would have been more effective as a four or five song 12", but what record wouldn't? The lesser tracks on here are a little cluttered. The vocal melodies overlap with the guitar leads, pulsating bass lines, incessant drumming. At times it's a little too crowded, the overlap gets a bit dense without catching on hooks and the sound kind of smears together. On the other hand, some tracks on here are perfect for these cold and dark times. At their best, the guitar lead or the vocals will step back and open up some breathing room for the melodies to bounce off each other. There are some certified bangers on here, which I'll put on a 15-minute "best of the new PLEASURE LEFTISTS record" mixtape. "Cannon", "You You", "Reality Changes"—all these blend the distant post-punk allure of the second SOUND record, the goth pop of SIOUXSIE, and the kind of punk propulsion that only comes from maniac Clevo vets. (Are you the kind of person that name checks HOMOSTUPIDS or NINE SHOCKS TERROR when talking about this band? Only at *MRR* are you going to ponder that one.) In particular, "Burning Down" has a great way of breaking things down close to the end of the record, with no drums for most of the song until a sparse programmed beat closes things out. The vocals and guitar merge into one fabric, like an enormous crushed velvet hoodie. Listen to this one while riding an empty bus through the fog, a comforting if eerily lonely atmosphere. (EW)
(Deranged)







POINTED STICKS – CD

This is not good. I am personally not against bands reuniting and trying to milk their former glory (or lack thereof). However, you really need to think it through thoroughly. Is it worth sullying that modicum of nostalgia your fans have for your old stuff by putting out a crappy new record? This probably should have been released under a new band name, but of course then no one would have cared. This album features five original POINTED STICKS members. It is more than 35 years later. Singer Nick Jones still sounds relatively similar to what he did back in the '70s, but this record is missing any semblance of power pop or punkishness. The music is slow, singer-songwriter sounding stuff. The lyrical content is still about love gone wrong. I do enjoy the CD cover which is five guys not afraid of showing their age, two with their backs to the camera. That is kind of cool. (CK)
(Sudden Death)

PRAWO DO JAZDY – LP

Originally from Poland, PRAWO DO JAZDY (which means "right to travel") live up to their name, now based in Berlin though it appears the band is on hiatus. With fast, chugging riffs, thick bass and rapid-fire drumming beneath melodic lead guitars and pissed vocals, I can imagine this bunch grew up on a healthy diet of early Polish punk (think MOSKWA, DEZERTER), early Euro crust and UK '77–82—not a bad mix, I gotta say! The lead vocals remind me of POST REGIMENT, which is always a good thing in my book, but I definitely prefer it when she sings in Polish, as some of the energy and bite get lost in translation on the tracks sung in English. Side A (with seven newer tracks) has a more metallic sound and composition style—mainly due to the guitars and drums—which I didn't find so appealing but sitting through it was worth it, as Side B, with eleven tracks from their 2005 *Recycling Punx* demo, hides little nuggets of joy just beneath the first listen layer. Jammers include "Ja się nie Złapie," "Garaż Punk," "Ja I Ty," "Ballada" and bonus instrumental "Filipiny," whose main riff sounds uncannily like "Propaganda" by Greeks PANDIMIA. This was a bit intimidating at first, I'll be honest, what with eighteen tracks on two sides plus three bonus tracks on the accompanying CD, but don't let the song count—or cover—deter you. If you have an appreciation for early '80s Polish / Eastern European punk, albeit played today, this is worth checking out. (LA)
(No Pasaran)

RATS REST – "Permanent Catastrophe" EP

This band is one of those groups you can safely (and affectionately) place into the subgenre *Region Rock: Next Gen*. And for all the right reasons! Right away you can hear the similarities to past "This Here" bands, between the catchy guitar hooks and gravely vocals. With RATS REST though, you get a colder and bleaker sound. Something commonly associated with bands from the Northwest, making it difficult to discern if they sound more like JACK PALANCE BAND or more the WIPERS. Tough call. But even tougher call: Do you dance or do you mosh to it? Either way, this record rules! Highly recommended! (FS)
(Erste Theke Tonträger)

REGAL – "Layer World" EP

Like it or not, it would seem that a CLEAN/Flying Nun style revival is now somewhat of a global phenomenon. In fact, the titular track here melds the driving jangle of the CLEAN's *Vehicle* and the foggy-headed meandering of the GREAT UNWASHED's *Clean Out Of Our Minds*. It's a pretty great song, standing up to some of the better stuff some of the Oceanic revivalists are pumping out. (See: the STEVENS, THIGH MASTER, BEEF JERK, some of the stuff on last year's *Temporary* compilation on Fishrider Records.) For those less enchanted with visions of yesteryear's jangle, the B-side features a more dead ahead garage psych number, a direct nod to the SEEDS or other British stomping, paisley blouse wearing longhairs. This is a suitably modern take on the style, incorporating an immensely echo-laden recording without managing to lose the snap and stomp that makes those *Nuggets* numbers so good. Closing off the record is a woozy throwaway jam that reminds me of early-to-mid-period UNREST singles. The feeling is closer to the A-side track with its meandering, unfocused melody and woozy vocals. This is a good 7" at the end of the day. I only really liked the A-side, but there's something here for most everyone, and despite all the past-mining that's going on, there's a suitably modern edge to the presentation and recording to keep it from being mired in days gone by. (LP)
(Frantic City)

REGN – "Mareritt" LP

This Norwegian duo gets extra points for making me work for this one. REGN's latest full-length is all over the map, but there are more than enough positive's to keep me listening. Mid-paced (almost) emo parts are delivered with filthy bass and no guitar, and then lunge into erratic fast parts with riffs and manic as the rhythms. And when they get slow, REGN really reign; the drums are thunderous and these are the parts where the soaring (sung) vocals work the best. The compositions are epic—"Sorgen Lange" descends into a drawn out one note jam with noise and electronics breaking through the monotony…and it works. Overall a very mysterious vibe even when they are raging full on, the bass acts as a component more than an instrument *(Does that even make sense? What I mean to say is that even when you can't tell what it's doing you can tell it's there, and it's always contributing)*. They are least successful when they are the most subdued (specifically in "Løpe" and "Bragt Til Ende") but even these parts create an atmosphere that helps accent the rest of the record. Lazy comparisons….? Somewhere between RAGANA and BIG BUSINESS. Yeah. It's weird, and even though the initial reaction at MRRHQ was overwhelming negative when I put this on over beers, REGN have won me over completely. (WN)
(Tonehjulet Kräftpest)

ROTTEN MIND – "I'm Alone Even With You" CD

Initially I thought this was more catchy, relentlessly melodic punk / hardcore in the post-OBSERVERS / Danish Kick 'n' Punch school of WIPERS worship that has been pandemic for fucking years at this point. But it soon became clear that the super catchy relentless nature of this group smushed them swiftly from that aforementioned tired and overused genre into an even more tired and overused genre: creepy pop punk for girl haters. This is a fucking horrible record. The lyrics are mainly about how women don't like the sad sack singer, about him watching them from across the room or staring obsessively at a picture of an ex with disdain. As a girl I fucking hate listening to tired misogynistic lyrics, but even more than that I hate listening to shitty "pro-gear pro-attitude" punk bands with endless fucking multi tracked guitar shreds all over the place. This makes me feel like I am stuck in the practice space from hell and there's no way out. (LG)
(Lovely)

ROYAL HEADACHE – "High" LP

Any band being reviewed at this mag channeling "the '80s" is usually accessing strictly punk rock DNA, but these guys are more on the early '80s rock trip—think of those dollar bin band rock bands that were aware enough of "the new wave" that their keyboardist got his mullet cut off, and the lead singer is maybe sporting a reflective purple jacket. The vocals are straight up soulful (non-cringeworthy white-guy-revival-meeting, at least) at times and the songs are intensely moseying along with that major-label-era REPLACEMENTS tempo, with exceptions to this being their '80s *indie* approach, which has me thinking SPIRAL JETTYS or the STEMS. It's got clean production and rock power all the way, baby, a sound perfectly suited for big halls and $8 beers. It's happening! (RW)
(What's Your Rupture?)

SATURDAY'S HEROES – "Hometown Serenade" CD

This Swedish band does the melodic street punk thing. I'm hearing some RANCID and DROPKICK MURPHYS here. These guys have some decent tunes as they have that folkish influence like AGAINST ME! at times. Very anthemic sound with tasteful guitar riffs along the ways. A lot of vocals in the mix which tones this down a bit. Still a good tuneful band. (RL)
(Lovely)

SELF MADE MONSTERS – "Draggin' Our Knuckles" CD

I pulled this out of my mailbox and didn't give it much of a look. Another fucking CD. All CDs blow. On the way home, much to the dismay of the guy in the seat next tome, I almost shit my pants. SELF MADE MONSTERS! Fart. If you haven't heard their *Love At First Gag* EP from the '90s, do so; you're in for some raw primitive, straightjacketed caveman rock'n'roll. They're the southern COSMIC PSYCHOS with the TROGGS and some fucked up old novelty horror records thrown in. This is their first CD from 2005 so I don't know why it's here but who gives a fuck. They have more in common with fellow North Carolinians ANTISEEN on this recording which ain't so bad. Shit. There's something about a crazed southern Cro-Magnon gentleman screaming *"Make my hand a hook!!"* to warm this writer's heart on those cold hoary nights. Now shut the door of my shack and leave me alone. (RO)
(Brain Drain)

SEX GRIMES – "Repeat Offenders" EP

An entire sophomore EP's worth of degenerate goon hardcore from this Australian band, upstanding citizens all, I'm sure. Nothing grabs you and throws you through a wall, but the moments that drip with near-metallic acid bullshit win out big time. "Angry Bogan Bitch" is pretty rough stuff. Maybe they're Australia's FANG? (MC)
(Nuclear Ass / Sados Solutions)

SHEARING PINX – "Poison Hands" LP

Ten years ago SHEARING PINX was riffing heavy off the likes of UNWOUND and SONIC YOUTH (they still do) and this is the finally vinyl version of a record from back then. This record is a good example of that, though it could have used some editing down all those years ago; the first side gets to be a same-y drag along. The second side contains only the first steps of a song and then delves into guitar noise fuckery. (MM)
(Gilgongo)

SICKMARK – "War In My Head" EP

This is some furious start stop, fast slow, west coast powerviolence out of Germany. This is my kind of shit! Taking cues from INFEST and MAN IS THE BASTARD they are hyper aggressive, disorienting, and maybe a little psychotic. It definitely gives me that uneasy, slightly frightened feeling that I'm looking for. Sounds like it was recorded live in the studio too. Nice touch! (BA)
(Dead Heroes / Dry Cough / Pain of Mind / Rope or Guillotine)

SIDETRACKED / TO THE POINT – split EP

Ugh. I want this record to come across my review desk every month for eternity. TO THE POINT drop sick and brutal start/stop hardcore of the highest caliber. Molded from the purest West Coast Powerviolence stock, their five tracks are beyond devastating, with visceral lyrics that make you think instead of spouting mindless vitriol. The last record was really good. This record is better. As I flipped it to blast Washington's SIDETRACKED I thought, *"Man, these kids are going to need to bring their A-game to match that TO THE POINT shit."* And that's exactly what they did. High-energy mania, they will stop by your turntable and drop off six tracks of fastcore/PV packed with more riffs than most bands can muster for a full-length. Both bands are all over the place and you gotta pay attention. You have to earn this shit…*but it's worth it*. File under: Crucial. (WN)
(Deep Six)

SKEPTICS – "Open Sea" 10"

SKEPTICS are a fuzzy French band. The music is jangly and catchy with a bit of darkness. If you enjoy American garage rock moderne, but find the majority of it too wimpy SKEPTICS may be the cure for your blues. (CK)
(Frantic City)

SPRAY PAINT – "Dopers" LP

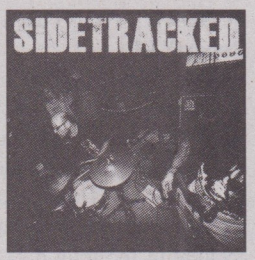
The guitarage is kind of uncomfortable and almost constantly exists in a repetitive call and response and the vocals are all kind of bored talk-singing, lyrically always sounding like a one-sided conversation or a reading of a transcript of somebody's neighbor yelling about get-off-my-lawn. This band has given themselves minimal and basic tools, a tight corral of some strings and drums and vocals, a stark aesthetic and predictable structure, a pile of things that could so easily be repeated and boring ad infinitum. There's some cheat in this where they add in some synth stuff but it still exists as definitely SPRAY PAINT. Sometimes it feels like the smooth weightlessness of swimming in a lake and then the sun harshly glints in your eyes or you're driving through a desert landscape and maybe jagged radio fuzz breaks it up but still fits in. Like the kicking of legs or rotation of wheels. (MM)
(Monofonus Press)

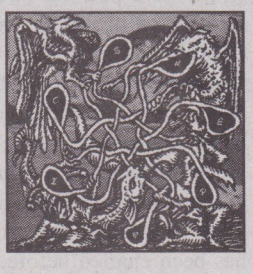
THE STOPS – "Nameless Faces" LP

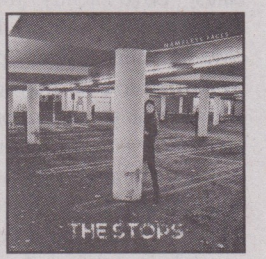
This Portland punk five-piece have been sounding promising, doing the rounds for a couple of years. This debut LP delivers the goods. The vocals betray a pop sensibility (including "woah-oh" backups) that is only barely tempered by the gloomy, rain-soaked melody behind the thick, melodic guitar riffs. If I was to describe this as early GO-GOS filtered through the OBSERVERS and THIS IS MY FIST you would mock me, but I mean it in a really good way. (AM)
(Dirt Cult)

SUBS – "yoU aRe yoU" CD

Nine times out of ten the CD submissions sound like they arrived on the steps at *Maximum* under the guidance of a clueless publicist. This is no exception. (MM)
(Sudden Death)







SUNDAY PAINTERS – "4th Annual Report" LP

These days it's rare to see someone trying something scary, new, or bizarre in punk music with absolute confidence. Then all of a sudden you get past reminder of future possibilities: you hear a song like "God Is My Biro," recorded out of a bullshit town just outside of Sydney in the long dark '80s. In short, absolute howling mania over a shudder-inducing slither of a backing track that sounds like it was left on the cutting room floor of an early CHROME session. Who can you imagine getting in the studio or on stage singing like that? Who would have imagined it coming together, in mid '80s Wollongong? There are some obvious influences in technique and approach—apt title nod to THROBBING GRISTLE—but that's not to say the ground they reach here has been charted before. This record fires off in a million different directions, and usually lands. "Love Faculty" for instance sounds like a slower CLEANERS FROM VENUS jam covered under a glassy pane of unidentifiable woodwind sounds, maybe the closest thing to a pop song on the record but always on the cusp of turning into something more twisted and jagged. Nothing is as it seems: there's some kind of Deep Dream effect where what sounds like a flute turns out to be the reverb tail of a guitar being played through a tape machine. This isn't what I'd call a perfect album. While it has more than its share of near-perfect moments, there are definitely some rough edges. Some of the longer cuts here amble on a bit and lose energy, but who knows, it could be for cinematic effect. As we learn from this record's insert (some very cool photos and flyers accompanied by a *Noisey* [ugh] interview with the surviving PAINTERS), the SUNDAY PAINTERS contributed to the soundtrack for a contemporary film about Wollongong, which today only streams at academic centers there. To whom it may concern: please send two copies of the DVD screener to our PO Box. (EW)
(What's Your Rupture?)

SUNDAY PAINTERS – "Something to Do" LP

Desolate art punk ramblings from Australia circa 1979. Scratchy guitars and spaced-out rhythms indicate that much like UK79, Orstralian punk explorer types were discovering dub and using it, along with ENO and the rumblings of a tired-with-the-old-ideas punk underground as another tool to lay out a new plan of attack. There's an urgent MAGAZINE meets KILLING JOKE sprawl, with wiry guitars feeding into each other over dark punk, almost industrial, reconstructions. Another recommended release for excitable ears! (LG)
(What's Your Rupture)

TWIN GUNS – "The Last Picture Show" LP

The music on this one has a nice sound. It is Spaghetti Western meets goth. The guitar bits are long and luxurious. The drums are casual, but hit the right emphasis. The whole thing really sets the mood. The singer has a nice voice and sounds rather mysterious, but I wish he was more eccentric. His vocal style sounds a bit too affected. He may not be as weird a personality as this band could use. (CK)
(Hound Gawd!)

URBAN SAVAGE – "Cop Riot" EP

Here's some really punchy and dense punk from Malmö, There's an undeniable Oi! comparison due to the huge gang choruses and driving guitars. The vocals are burly while still melodic in nature. The recording is so hard-hitting that it almost has a hardcore element, but not stylistically. Some of the riffs and hooks are so familiar that I'm trying to see if I can recall which Riot City singles they're paying homage to—or maybe they're just great songs! Think CRIMINAL DAMAGE but a little harder and less dancey. Totally solid. (MA)
(Foreign Legion)

VASTATION / WAR//PLAGUE – "United in Darkness" split EP

I think I need a shower after being engulfed in this thick black cloud of metallic crust soot. Portland's VASTATION drops two filthy tracks of grim BOLT THROWER inspired stenchcore. They keep it loose and heavy as fuck. WAR//PLAUGE brings us more putrid stench, this time in the Minneapolis style. Their song is a festering AMEBIX dirge, featuring constant double bass drum, and shouted '80s thrash vocals. The other track is an officially approved TOTALITÄR cover. Here, they could have been a little more nasty. I'd say this is an overall winner though, so go out and get your grubby little hands all over it. (BA)
(Profane Existence)

WILD MOTH – "Inhibitor" LP

I was going to do a one-sentence review and quote another shitworker on this one, ("A moth circling a light bulb that hasn't been changed in 20 years"), but I'd be remiss to not get into more detail. I don't want anyone to think that I don't like this record because I just don't "get it" or because it's "not my thing." I mean, I fuck with *Leaves Turn Inside You* heavily, I listened to the CHAVEZ discography while commuting to my last bullshit job, I even liked the new SWERVEDRIVER record. This record is just pretty boring. In fact, it's like a computer made a rock record designed to appeal to moody dudes between ages 15 and 32 who have been to a barbershop in the last four weeks. There are a couple interesting melodic turns and crafty chord progressions, but it doesn't really go anywhere. It all sounds flat. There aren't a lot of dynamics, not many hooks, nary a riff, hardly more than one track. The first song here is probably the best one, but are you going to track down the promo flexi on which it also appears? I appreciate the craft, but I wish it accumulated into something that didn't leave people shaking their heads at well-intentioned men of my tender young age. (EW)
(Iron Pier)

WOLFPACK – "Seen Not Herd" CD

Slick punk from some well-intentioned Aussies. Subtle notes of ROLLINS BAND and crossover linger on the nose while you swill this shit, a pint of AUS ROTTEN resting in your hand and UK punk on your mind. Too polished and too proficient perhaps, tracks like "Toxic Times" and "Company Policy" kinda get lost in the liberal smattering of chops and metal riffing, but how can you really complain by saying "nah, these guys play too good"? Metallic punk with gruff vocals assailing homophobia, corporate stupid existence, dumb ass religious nutters, and friends gone by…this hits every *punk* button. (WN)
(Sudden Death)

X_X – "Albert Ayler's Ghosts Live At The Yellow Ghetto" CD

Here is a great Cleveland, OH band that put out some spastic, quirky, insane art punk in the late '70s and then disappeared. For some reason, they've reformed a few decades later and threw this weird slab of metal on my desk. It's still spastic and punk when they want it to be, but it seems these guys are also in love with wingnut jazz. If you remember this band's early output, I think you'll be stoked to hear their return. Fans of sparse, passionate, art punk from old-timers (this is most certainly not a diss) should pick this up quickly. The fucked-up jams are ugly, and the pop gems in between are actually fucking beautiful. This is, thankfully, not some grandpas trying to relive their former glory by being softer, lamer versions of themselves, but, instead, some weirdos who just grew into older weirdos. The liner notes kinda make it seem like this might be just a one-off. I hope that is bullshit. (DZ)
(Smog Veil)

THE YOLKS – "Don't Cry Anymore / I Wanna Be Dumb"

I'm a big fan of the YOLKS. I've heard them criticized before for being copycats of the STROKES. Maybe, but I still find them so catchy and full of poppy goodness that I can overlook little things like sounding a bit like another band. The truth is, they're 23 times better than the STROKES. The A-side is a catchy, mid-tempo, sort of somber, acoustic ballad. On the B-side, they plug in the amplifiers and pick

up the tempo a tad. Like its A-side partner, it's catchy as all get-out and gets down to that sound that we have come to expect from them. Two thumbs up, for sure. (KK)
(Bachelor / Randy)

ZEBRAS – "The City of Sun" LP

This cover art with the handscrawled titles and ghostly images threw me for a loop. I wasn't sure what I was gonna get. Some nth generation "spooky post-punk" band? RUDIMENTARY PENI-influenced weirdness? Nope! It's some damn heavy, metallic hardcore from Madison, WI. I really love the intense drum fills on "Turning the Bones" and "Solomon." Vocally this is pretty solid. Overall, it's somewhere between UNBROKEN and TODAY IS THE DAY (with a better singer) crossed with various eras of NEUROSIS especially the moog-based parts. Even the album closer recalls something off of *Pain of Mind*. It's great to hear a band take these inspirations and create something that doesn't come off as dull or overblown. (JD)
(Secret)

ZLODZIEJE ROWERÓW – "Demo 1995" LP

This is the sweetest thing, in that it's obviously a labor of love and a really great reissue of a band that obviously meant a ton to those involved. You get a huge booklet with text in both Polish and English about the history of the band and this release, all the lyrics, tons of photos and even a Polish-only history of all the band's gigs. I'm sure that at the time this band was a breath of fresh air compared to the crust and folk punk that dominated the Polish scene but…it's just not very good. The playing ability is definitely there, and there are moments that recall FUGAZI and MOSS ICON that are genuinely good, but the vocals are monotone, the liberal use of slap-bass is a big turn-off and there just aren't enough hooks to hang your hat on. Honestly, more than anything this reminds me of perennial Midwestern local opener MAJORITY OF ONE. Our review copy didn't come with one, but this was also issued with a documentary DVD about the band that might be an interesting watch, though it's presumably all in Polish. (AU)
(Refuse)

ZULUS – "II" CD

Reverb-drenched vocals, submerged in a thick awesome mess of primitive, distorted, noisy, noisy rock. Repetitive, psychotic, intense, and, dare I say, poppy noise. I could listen to these songs all damn day and lose my mind for a week, but I think four times is enough. Think a less abrasive, yet more insane BABOON. *Yes!* (DZ)
(Aagoo)

V/A – "The Dicks From Texas and Friends" CD

The title of this CD is (willfully?) misleading, as no members of the actual DICKS play on this CD. At least half of the 30 bands recorded at the same Austin studio, which would explain the uniformity of sound and possibly the personnel behind this pointless endeavor (there is no such thing as a necessary tribute album). Most of the bands are lifestyle bar-punk that might appeal more to readers of *Razorcake*, with a handful doing their butchering by acoustic, electronic, or AmRep means. I didn't need to hear wah-wah on "Kill From The Heart" and I certainly didn't need to hear a fucking quasi-alt-country steel-string rendition of "Hate The Police." (DG)
(Grackle Butter)

V/A – "Give and Take" CD

The promise of "Malaysian Hardcore Punk" almost made me shit my pants. The delivery, however, fell pretty short. There are a couple of ragers on here, but most cuts fall into the pop punk category, or maybe like an effort to sound like a mid '90s Fat Wreck comp, and a major bummer for me is that most tracks are sung in English. To be fair, the content varies pretty drastically and a few weird gems do stand out. They weren't hardcore punk by any means, but there's definitely some high quality mixtape fodder in here. There's a pretty thick booklet included with lyrics and/or explanations for the few songs not already in English, and an extensive contact list for the bands. The sound quality isn't shit, either. (DZ)
(Nervhous / Pissant / Red Ink Entertainment / Tenzenmen)

V/A – "Suspect Three" CD

This Japanese split features three bands: the MISCASTS, JAHANGIR, and NOWAN. The MISCASTS sound pretty great with a hyper pop sound that borders on raw power pop and tuneful melodic punk rock'n'roll. JAHANGIR has a twisted proggy punk sound that sounds a little VICTIM'S FAMILY. So so to me. NOWON is speedy poppy punk with tight riffs and hooks. Very mid '90s sounding. Four songs by each band, a decent three band split. (RL)
(Hardcore Kitchen)

V/A – "We Jam By Condos" LP

A compilation of the current Austin scene, here we go: GHETTO GHOULS do a GANG OF FOUR twentieth-generation groove circa the INTELLIGENCE, SPRAY PAINT are the best rock band in Texas right now so nothing more to add there, HIDDEN RITUAL do a spooky-echo vocals deal over some throbbing organs that won't have you tossing your Sacred Bones titles anytime soon, SOFT HEALER also lean on the keyboards to get a mid '80s Kiwi sound going that mutates after a break into some decent menace, SURVIVAL are drum machine Italian horrorscapes, nice effect eh wot, SPIT & SHINE are straight-up art-gallery-opening-night-DJ-does-IDM-mp3s shit, TROLLER sound like the local equivalent of Sacto's SCREATURE and are recommended for that reason, MASSAGEINIST have a screamily-boring approach that had me absently admiring the paint job in the hallway after 30 seconds, EMPTY MARKETS have a nice big rock sound but don't separate from the pack, BREAKOUT drop your startled ass into sudden pit action and while it could be the contextual shock that makes it work, kudos nonetheless, and the comp concludes with AUNT'S ANALOG who are actually Sam McPheeters in disguise, I'm presuming, since this glitchy electronic blur is straight up an outtake from *Fruited Other Surfaces*. I hope you enjoyed the tour, bathrooms on your right as you exit. (RW)
(Monofonus Press)

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Bad Hair Life: badhairliferecords.blogspot.com
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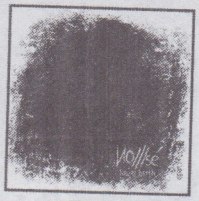

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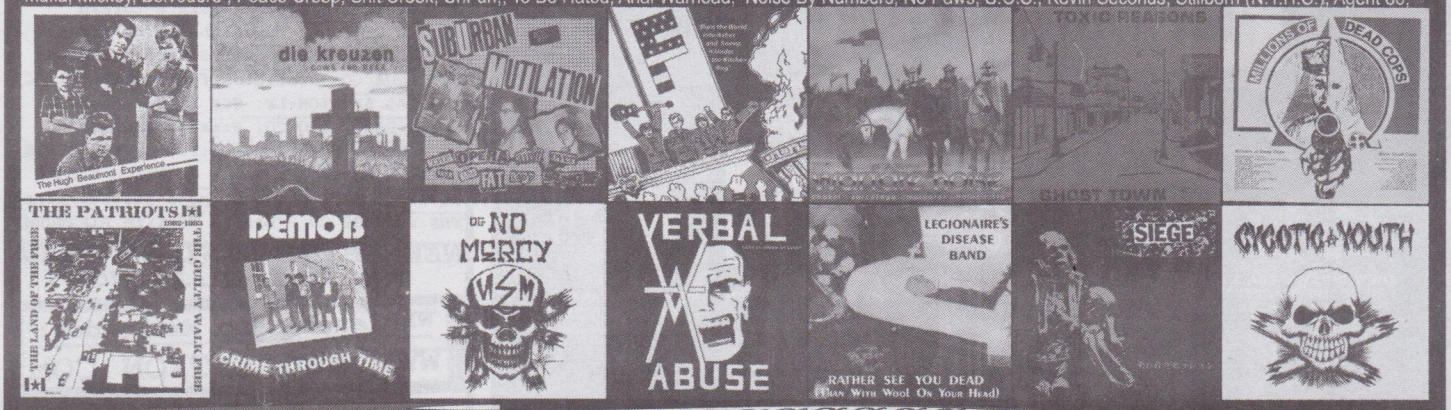

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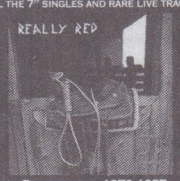

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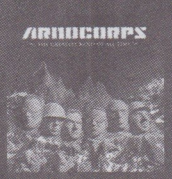

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DEMOS

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ANCIENT FILTH – *Everything in the Void* – The big theme of this record is people vs. machines. ANCIENT FILTH's thesis—"Machines Should Work, People Should Think"—proposes that once we rely on machines, then we work for them and they think for us. The message is heavy, but the music is delivered in a tonally bright and positive way. This is hardcore with consistent underlying acceleration; the melody doesn't always have to blast, but there's always a current keeping the output flowing. Even the song breaks never let up. I'm a sucker for loops and monologues and quick sound bites maintain the momentum, bridging the gaps between songs. You can almost hear the band take a breath underneath, but just a short one. Smart music that makes you think. (Michael) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, ancientfilth.bandcamp.com)

APOSTASIS – *Vaginal Onslaught* – All womyn hardcore from Southern California, chaotic, screaming madness that sounds like it came from a past decade called the '90s. The third track is the best—they do a good job of slowing shit down in a manner that makes you feel uncomfortable. The vocals are high and grating and intense and the last song is really fukkn fast and manic and I like it. Nine minutes in total. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, facebook.com/apostasis)

BAD BOYFRIENDS – *Songs Yer Mom Taught Us* – Poppy, garage-y punk. Not really pop punk, but cute surf with quick ditto delay on everything for that teenie bopper goodness. Songs like "Earache" sound like they were just making it up as they went along and the first words off the top of his head were about how his ear hurt. No real big messages, just minor inconveniences in their day-to-day, simple and fun. They're your punk boyfriend that your parents don't like, not because he's dangerous but because he's a loser. If you're into not-so-badboy punk then this is the scene from *Rock'n'roll High School* where Johnny and Joey come in through your bedroom window. (Michael) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, badboyfriendslr@gmail.com, badboyfriends.bandcamp.com)

BEARCAT 9000 – Un-noteworthy but strangely catchy garage punk trio from Montana, featuring a father-son rhythm section. At the risk of sounding like a condescending shithead, I can't think of any way to describe that other than cute. These four tracks are decently recorded, except the vocals are sort of awkward and inconsistent. At times I'm reminded of M.O.T.O. (Matt) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, howenathan89@gmail.com)

BLACK HOLE YOUTH – This two-piece (guitar and drums) band from Chicago plays a cross between punk and lo-fi '90s grunge... like a "quiet-loud-quiet" formula. The lyrics are vague at times, but cast a critical eye on punk complacency, white feminism and the gender binary. With a couple of exceptions, the delivery of the vocals is incredibly dry and flat, as if they're just reading off a sheet of paper. The vocalists sound like they'd rather be doing anything else in the world. No passion. (Greg) (10-song CD-R, lyrics included, blackholeyouth.bandcamp.com)

BRUTE FORCE – Slamming their way out of Toronto and you need to listen. This demo is about five minutes long, but it will make you question yourself, hate authority, and want to punch a wall. Think of HOUNDS OF HATE with slightly cleaner vocals, similar to PRODUCT OF WASTE, and a riff that drives the point home... and you almost have BRUTE FORCE. (4-song cassette, lyrics included, bruteforcehc.bandcamp.com)

CARRION SUNFLOWER / VVLAD – *split* – Atmospheric synth and vocals opens up the CARRION SUNFLOWER side, even more sparse than their split that I reviewed last year. Just enough of the norms to avoid sounding pretentious, they are shamelessly self-indulgent but set a legitimate mood. Really simple, but I suppose that's why it works. VVLAD does the same for one track, then cranks out raw and distant sounding black metal to close the cassette... you could always tell that the sounds were rooted in metal, and it was a perfect way to bring the thing to an end. You like lo-fi and dark? Then I recommend this. (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, xbezerkerrecordsx.bandcamp.com)

CHANDAILS – Four Chicano boys from Phoenix, AZ who have been making psychedelic pop hits since they were sixteen-years-old. Now in their early twenties, they churn out idiosyncratic songs with rad interlocking post-punk riffs and sung-spoke vocals, somewhere in between the VELVET UNDERGROUND and PYLON. The insert only names two tracks, but it sounds likes there are at least four different songs: the three bouncy melodic jammers on the A-side sound like riding a runaway warp star in Kirby's Adventure, while the B-side features a looped piano tape collage. (Sean) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, chandails.bandcamp.com, thechandails@gmail.com)

CONUNDRUM – Riffs all over the damn place. Plodding, creepy crawl, circle pit-inducing riffs. Enough riffs to keep you in your shit for weeks. Mid-tempo, gritty hardcore punk that the kids will surely go apeshit for. Those throaty vocals, that powerful recording? You know this is what you want, you monkey. Ugly recordings from early and late 2014 packaged for your consumption...I suggest you consume if you like things that are good. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, robertatrisk@gmail.com)

COWARD – Earnest and anthemic punk that wants you to sing along (like really bad sometimes). Fuzzed-out guitars play melodic riffs and the vocals remind me of DALTONIC, if only because I've been inexplicably thinking about that band all day. This sounds like the mellowed out record that a once-intense hardcore band made that all of their fans hated when it came out but then when they returned to it years later they were all like *"Shit, man! This is pretty good!"* (Robert) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, facebook.com/cowardpunks)

DEADLY VIPERS – *Cataclysmic Events* – The cover of this tape screams stone metal; I was surprised to find it was female-fueled garage rock. DEADLY VIPERS successfully blend heavier sludge-influenced riffs with softer punk vocals. *"I am not at your disposal, I am not your property,"* hooked me as soon as I heard it. I listened to the tape over and over on my commute across the Bay. Their sound reminds me of THEE OH SEES and WAVVES with subtle hints of BLACK SABBATH. I was very surprised. I'm addicted to this band. (Tina) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, kingpizzarecords.com)

DEAMONS – *Best Outta You* – After a bit of uncommon guitar riffing, these Canadians burst into some pulsing mid-tempo punk with unexpected snotty vocals. At times it sounds to me like a cleaner and more modern version of the LEWD, but some of the songs drag on a little long. There's an unappealing rock element that is unappealing, but this tape is still more interesting to me than many other new things I hear. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, deamons.bandcamp.com)

FASTPLANTS – Fast and fiery punk built for singing along. Kinda garage-y in the way that NEW BOMB TURKS were (are? have they reunited?). You know, bro-ish but grudgingly good? Vocals remind me a *lot* of Chicago's M.O.T.O. but the jams are faster and harder. The shit is pretty good, but it's the chorus and two-chord meat to "Drugs" are the killers. Well, that and the fact that these monkeys are from Waukegan. (Robert) (4-song CD-R, lyrics not included, fastplantsband@gmail.com)

FOSSOR HOUSE – *Western Session* – Expertly assembled post-hardcore with angsty dramatic buildups and off-kilter interludes. There are some

seriously pretty instrumental parts that make you wonder if it's OK to like them and still be a punk. It's kind of hypnotizing. The timing of the arrangements gives the songs enough space to kind of spread out and be themselves. You should probably listen to this tape somewhere you can also kind of spread out and be yourself (please, please not on public transit). It says it's only two songs but it's just as long as a lot of bands' six-song demos so pencil it in. (Heather) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, fossorhouse.bandcamp.com)

GLUT – *Primitive* – Maximum energy with hooks galore, these New Orleans kids come to the table with some serious weight. Gruff street punk vocals are a typically a perfect complement to a band that cranks out catchy hardcore, but GLUT is something more than just that; the attack is off the rails, and even the catchiest riffs are mean as fukk…and it's *fast*. The way punk should be. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, robminimarts@yahoo.com)

HALF GOON – *Homie Lover* – Heavy trebly tone that they're beating to death. It's bright but high impact, happily devastating. Huge JESUS LIZARD influence but with more prominent attacking vocals, as if he's pulled himself up and on top of the mix. They start off very positive, almost dance punk and then work their way down. By the last song "Million Mile Man" they're particularly bleak, tricking you with fun dance and then killing the mood in the room so you're left feeling beaten and bummed. Such a good range, such fun bummer acid punk. (Michael) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, halfgoonband@gmail.com, halfgoon.bandcamp.com)

HARD FEELINGS / SHARK PACT – *split* – SHARK PACT comes through with four synth-driven melodic ragers. The clear recording quality really benefits this band. They sound like a weird mix between a Pat Benatar single and a crust-pop party anthem. Definitely reminds me of the most catchy sing-along parts of DRUNKEN BOAT or SNUGGLE songs, only this time with synth. I'm actually not sure how to dance to this although I'm sure I want to. Doubled-up vocals really drive home that Pacific Northwest enthusiasm and sincerity that feels wildly real in spite of the fact that we live in a world where "enthusiasm" and "sincerity" have been targeted for commodification and mass-reproduction by an avalanche of faakers since punk began. HARD FEELINGS shows up to the party with a whole bunch of sick Midwestern pop punk, like a 12-pack under each arm or something. The first track has that paradoxically innocent/defeated charm that you heard on the FROZEN TEENS full-length. Maybe it's a Minnesota thing. The other five tracks on the HARD FEELINGS side are faster and there's a solid HICKEY influence. If you thought pop punk was stale and there wasn't room for innovation you were wrong. If you thought that, you're probably close minded and hate pop punk so I won't tell you to check this out. This tape is shockingly original and both bands really take it somewhere new. (Heather) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, P.O. Box 913, Olympia, WA 98507, ditchesrecords.com)

HEAVY MAKEUP – From Gothenburg, Sweden comes this grungy despicable punk tape. Informed by the dirge-ridden BLACK FLAG and YDI stuff, the tracks plod along, oozing self-loathing and negativity. "Begging For Consent" is about exactly what you think it's about. Save your breath, dude, no one cares how gross you are. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, heavymakeupinyourface@gmail.com)

HOMESTRINGS – Angular and kinda lurchy Tennessee punk that takes me back twenty years. Amateurish delivery in all of the endearing ways, but offered with a proficiency that's not initially evident. In other words: it feels like they are just throwing the shit out there and going for it, and they are, but these are well crafted tunes with hooks galore. Obligatory (and sadly inevitable) '90s riot grRrl comparisons are perhaps lazy, but not unwarranted. K Records fans take note. (Robert) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, M. Purcell, 1715 E. 12th St, Chattanooga, TN 37404, homestrings.bandcamp.com)

HOT BREATH – This Chicago three-piece plays super emotional pop punk that's backed up with dynamic songwriting and exciting tempo changes, hooky tracks with massive sing-along potential. Never a dull moment! The recording is dirty and distorted, and captures how raw and passionate these songs come across live, feedback barely kept in check and bursting at every seam. They do a killer Cranberries cover too, which you can hear on their other tape from their most recent tour. (Sean) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, hotbreathchi.bandcamp.com, prairiesmokerecords@gmail.com)

HUIABELLA FANTASTICA – *Huiabella Situation 1* – Fast, catchy punk from Tallinn, Estonia. The first four tracks are all appropriately short for the level of energy they pack in. The vocals sometimes stray into an angry-sloppy style reminding me of a more street punk sound, but the rest of the instruments are super tight and clean in a very un-street punk way. The lyrics that are in English are political. The last track is all quiet whisper singing with dramatic acoustic chords over it. Wish I could tell what they're saying. It sounds serious. (Heather) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, smashitdead@gmail.com)

INFAMIA / INTOTHEBAOBAB / NOWHITERAG – Three bands celebrating their 10th anniversary by playing a show in a rehearsal studio and releasing the recording to benefit said room. Good idea, Italian punks, good ass idea. Chaotic and high energy punk from INFAMIA; slightly slower, plodding shit from INTOTHEBAOBAB (their final track is my fave on the tape; and NOWHITERAG's UK-styled pogo punk of the finest fukkn order. Bands are from Bologna and Modena, and represent their scene well here. Cool idea and well executed. (Robert) (13-song cassette, lyrics not included, nuclearchaos@autoproduzioni.net, nuclearchaos.noblogs.org)

INGRATE – Now *this* is the shit that all those bandwagon jumping hardcore monkeys are trying so hard to ape. I mean, maybe INGRATE is trying to jump on the rebirth of knuckledragging hardcore just like all those other ingrates, but this shit feels wrong in all the right ways and I don't think you can fake wrong…*can you?!* The snare sounds like a hollow hand clap (especially bizarre during the breakdowns), and the vocals are off the fukkn rails demented while the rest of the band bashes out a few simple and simply killer rudimentary US hardcore tracks. You can try as hard as you want, you Hitler youth haircut having, appropriately dirty white outfit wearing, perfectly intentionally accidentally awkward riff playing faux mutants, but you'll never feel as real as this shit from the border. So simple, so weird, so pure…and so good. (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, R. Rios, 1920 Duke Ave, McAllen, TX 78504)

IT REALLY IS – *It Really Is* – Jerky and erratic Midwest/Plains punk with confident female vocals that equally harness L7 and the early '80s. I like that when I listen to this tape, it feels like IT REALLY IS genuinely doesn't give a fuck. Cool. Off-center punk shits. (Robert) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, rainyroadrecords.bandcamp.com)

JUNTA – *Demo # 1* – A very capable new Copenhagen band blending ugly fast hardcore and Japanese hardcore from the '80s. The riffs are cool and the songs have a strong galloping rhythm. The lyrics are in Danish and the vocals are drenched in heavy delay, causing them to feel separated from everything else. I think it would sound better if they were a bit clearer—sometimes the vocal delay seems like a way to make boring vocals less boring, but this guy doesn't sound boring in the first place. Just one man's opinion. This fits in the realm of SKITKIDS and DEATH TOKEN, and overall I see a lot of potential. (Matt) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, junta.punx@gmail.com)

KING WORM – *No Future City* – The band starts it off with "Kill Pizza Punks," which is catchy but also feels like a jokey, throwaway song. It's only like a minute long and then they blast through some ugly, battered, pissed fucking punk. The singer seems like he doesn't like anything…like if you asked him how he's doing, he'd say "Fucking terrible! Why did you even ask me that, you little shit?! Now, I have to think about that all day! *Fuck*!!" Downer jams. Walking in the rain and shitting on yourself at the same time. A big ol' turd in the shoe. That's where this is at. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, ooeygooeytapes.bandcamp.com)

LOS HUAYCOS – *The Inevitable Devastations and Consequences of the Huaycal Attack* – Lima punks now living in Oakland that have that South American dedication to traditional punk: aggressive, brash, fast, dirty. The gruff vocals especially have lots of strength, similar to MANGANZOIDS or FUN PEOPLE. Spanglish lyrics that totally keep your attention, sprinkling the opposite language throughout. I was constantly picking up on cognates and bought everything he said, even when scrambling to translate. The liner notes say, "When we recorded we drank

Pisco and Inca Cola." Legit. (Michael) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, lowborn1@gmail.com, loshuaycos.bandcamp.com)

LUCID TERROR – *Whip Till You Faint* – Raw and primal two-piece death metal reborn as guttural crust/grind, this New York outfit caught me off guard. They wrote a little note that said they had "much raw punk attitude," and it shows. That's what makes this shit different *(read: better)*. An overpowering presentation of unfiltered brutality awaits you. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, lucidterror.bandcamp.com, serenitynowtapes.bandcamp.com)

LYSOL – So, FREAK VIBE broke up and this band formed with most of the same people and a similar…um…*vibe,* so to speak. To my ears, this band feels less like straight up CRAMPS worship and more like creeped out rock'n'roll. Still in that same vein, but more direct. It's not rocket science, but it's done well and played with heart. It's all great, but the sound quality of my tape is like a garbage fart. (Greg) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, stainedwithbleach@gmail.com)

MALCOLM – *Tank* – Stockton, CA sludgy grind and dank nihilistic hardcore. I'm not sure what to make of song titles like "Apathetic Douchebag," "Kill," "White Wednesday," and "Myke [sic] Tyson's PunchOut," but I'm fairly certain the sardonic and irreverent lyrics and style here are sincere. These tunes ooze friction and frustration, but the overall feel is more escapist than aggressive. AGATHOCLES chaos with MISERY INDEX attitude and BLOOD DUSTER audacity. (Jason) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, xmalcolmx.bandcamp.com)

MÁSCARAS – *Máscara vs. Máscara* – Fuzzed-out and brilliant surf psych from Portland. None of the elements should work, but they come together perfectly, and this seemingly simple release is a total bomber. Listen to the guitars on "City In Ruins"—you'll thank me. (Robert) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, getresurrected.com)

MILD SHAG – Holy *shit!* This is what I want! Hardcore street punk mania shoved right down my earholes, this Singapore band takes Oi! and turns the intensity up ten thousand notches until you feel like you are listening to raging noise punk but then you realize you are pogoing in your bedroom. You want your mind blown? Here you go: MILD SHAG is the best parts of KROMOSOM and MARKED MEN, *at the same fukkn time*. It's blowing my mind every time I listen to it *(and I've listened several times already)*, but if you take all the awesome shit about hopelessly catchy garage punk and cram it into all the awesome things about chaotic hardcore then I fukkn swear you could still not dream up this band. The fast part in "Born Dead" is as close to perfect as I could ever ask for…best release this month, hands down. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, mildshag.bandcamp.com Ilyas Imran, Blk 754 Pasir Ris St. 71, 06-126 SINGAPORE 510754)

MOZART – *The Tick* – If I give this a bad review, I could get fired from *MRR*. Two coordinators are in this band along with a woman who people believe is intimidating and some guy named Wormhole who once won a hot dog eating contest *without knowing it was a hot dog eating contest*. I don't give a fuck. I'll trash this if I want to. Their title song (titular?) is composed of only two guitar chords with a tone that I can only describe as "broken". It's played at a breathless, breakneck, falling apart speed and has all of the potential to go nowhere but is saved by a truly deranged and desperate vocal wail. But that's just the first song. As the tape careens through its next fifteen minutes, the band sounds raw and destructive in a way that eats paint off of a wall, while Marissa (the singer) sounds like she's massively clearing a path through a sea of posers and sycophants. Clocking in at five minutes, "The Embarrassment" is MOZART's "Shot Down" (GERMS, y'all...not SONICS). They play a circular, repeating riff and lay the groundwork for Marissa to use her voice as a nightmarish, caterwauling force that might haunt you. Raw, fucked up punk for weirdos on the fringe. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, m-o-z-a-r-t.bandcamp.com)

MURROWIND – A brutal exercise in bedroom black metal, Kentucky's MURROWIND are darker than night and painfully raw. I can only assume that this is a one person operation, because everything sounds digitally manipulated and distorted to oblivion…but fans of the noisy and the primitive will eat MURROWIND for breakfast. Harsh and as non-musical as they come, this four track assault is at least noteworthy, and at most? Well, it's mostly weird as shit. (Robert) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, murrowind.bandcamp.com)

MUZZY – *Kill God* – I like that people are pushing the boundaries of music in general and punk specifically, pushing them so much that we lowly music listeners sometimes are at a loss. Not only are we not sure how to describe it, we are not sure what it even *is*, and that is a success. It's possible that MUZZY is little more than an improv drum track, chaotic blasting drums that sporadically find themselves playing a straight hardcore beat before launching back into self indulgence. Then some maniac took that drum track and added self indulgent and unintelligible vocal manipulations and samples and electronic noise all over the place with no adult supervision. I'm not saying that's what happened, I'm just saying it's possible. What's more likely, however, is that MUZZY is a calculated exercise in two-piece noise, a relentless sensory overload with an absolutely manic pace. Fukk man, this shit is so far off the map. (Robert) (1-track cassette, lyrics included, muzzypdx.bandcamp.com)

NATE 9000 – This is the solo project of Nate from BEARCAT 9000 (also reviewed in this issue). Simple bedroom recordings with mostly goofy lyrics and unmemorable tunes backed by a drum machine. Everyone should have an outlet to make art, but that doesn't mean I have to like it. Kind of embarrassing. (Matt) (10-song CD-R, lyrics not included, nate9000.bandcamp.com)

NIEGALO TODO – *Absurdo Esceptismo Superficial* – Powerful and actually pissed-off sounding hardcore punk from Chiapas. Punk from isolated places typically lends to distinct qualities in sound, and this is certainly the case with NIEGALO TODO. Tempos are all over the map, but mostly this shit thrashes hard, and the desperate backup screams intensify things more. Nice looking layout and great songs. Recommended! (Matt) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, niegaloxtodo.bandcamp.com)

PAKOTE – Blazingly fast D-beat from these Finnish teens. This sounds like it was written and recorded in 1988, and it rips. Super limited—only 60 copies!—so get it while you can. (Sean) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, r_eronen@gmail.com, SHJ Records, Sopentie 2 B 17, 51900 JUVA, FINLAND,)

PANSY – *Failure* – Low-fi, raw, bizarrely garbled blackened weirdness. The music is very punk'n'roll in style, but there are eerie bestial and possessed-sounding vocals over everything. PANSY is kind of catchy in an anxious and uneasy way, like catching the bus. Yeah, it's rolling along—not too fast, not to slow—but, boy, is it ever weird. It sounds pretty disgusting but at least it's listenable with some surprising '80s punk breakdowns. Self-described queer/trans "pornogrind." Okay. Anarchy in Milwaukee... This is approved. (Jason) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, pansymke.bandcamp.com)

PINK FLAG – *The Gift of Knives* – I didn't know bands like this still existed! Reminiscent of the '00s indie rock that was a hold over from bands like Q AND NOT U or PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES. It's effortlessly math-y and not showing off at all. Not trying to be technical or too busy, but more of an answer to feeling confined to the same handful of power chords, flying way against riff structure. They ride the chords out and let that treble ring, holding it back, then finally hitting urgent choruses. It's smart music that's easy to listen to over and over. The opening track is kind of weak but makes sense in context. Once you can get past it, they'll consistently surprise and impress you. (Michael) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, betsyshane@gmail.com, negativefunrecords.bandcamp.com)

POSITIVE NO – *Glossa* – Sensitive indie rock that recalls '90s emo, but way over on the soft end of the spectrum. This being a hardcore magazine, I'm sure y'all will hate on it. So go ahead and get ready to talk some shit. In truth, they have really creative song structures that never rely on riffs or power chords, but instead explore simplistic long measure melodies. Her voice is very sweet and comfortable so you'll need to calm down to her level or else the pace will eventually piss you off. They're not worried that anyone will yank them offstage or knock a mic out of their hands. They're very comfortably expressing all of their teenage middle school problems. *"I'd rather be by myself than with you."* It's bedroom diary music. If you can't bring yourself to remember those moody hormonal times then just give

this tape to your younger sibling. (Michael) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, tracy@littleblackcloudrecords.com, negativefunrecords.bandcamp.com)

REMAIN IN VAIN – *Divining Gold From Fire & Ice* – Mosh friendly speed picking crossover thrash mania? Yes. But this ain't your posi "pro scene/pro friends" horseshit, these Southern California dudes are grim and fierce…these breakdowns mean a little more when you're singing along in isolation. Songs about trying, about frustration, about drugs (not glorious songs, mind you), about determination…and there can be no doubt that REMAIN IN VAIN is real as shit. They got riffs for days, but they aren't trying to impress you—which is exactly how they impressed me. This demo is from early 2014, but now is a good time to get on board. (Robert) (11-song CD-R, lyrics included, 1039records.bandcamp.com)

SBDC – *Pretty Shitty* – These four ladies from Vancouver offer up nine jangly and very bouncy tracks of fun punk. They make short songs, everyone singing together, often dropping out to dramatically emphasize a line, then kicking back in full blast. This style is like a "punk show tune," and works really well for them. The writing is simple but clever and interesting. They offer suggestions of what SBDC could stand for, of which my two favorites are "Some Boys' Dicks Curve" and "Super Bloody Diva Cup." I also should not fail to mention the raucous cover of "Pretty Woman." (Matt) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, sbdc.bandcamp.com)

SEVERE – Three track teaser for a 12" that is probably (hopefully?) out by the time you read this, Toronto's SEVERE dropped some serious hardcore into my lap. Metal guitars and a late '80s NYC approach to tough ass 'core suits me just fine…I look forward to hearing an entire slab's worth of those leads. (Robert) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, severetohc.bandcamp.com, xricksmithx@gmail.com)

SLUGBUGS – *Electronic Backtalk* – Total cretin shit happening here. Falling apart analog synth noise with trashcan sounding drums and a vocalist who rides the line between pissed and bored. It sounds like these freaks saw AMOEBAS IN CHAOS, COUNT VERTIGO, and DOW JONES AND THE INDUSTRIALS, jumped into a time machine, landed in Ohio in 2015, found the most busted four track ever and created these desperate sounds for you to enjoy while forgetting that the last 34 years of music ever happened. Yeah, it's good. (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, bugcartel.storeenvy.com, 2656 Dayton Ave, Columbus, OH 43202)

STASIS – *Progress* – Not even a subtle hint of bullshit, Italy's STASIS launch right into harsh high-speed crust as soon as your finger leaves the "play" button. (Black) metal tinged guitars decisively pierce the whole recording, giving the band a high-end tension that is balanced by a burly vocal attack perfectly suited to their brand of metalcrust. There are a few devastating slow parts—STASIS could level buildings if they wanted to stick to doom, but thankfully they don't! (Robert) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, stasispunk@gmail.com, stasispunk.bandcamp.com)

TERRORELHARITAS – This band has riffs, for sure. I've never said that, let alone typed it, but that's the best way to describe it. Two-piece grind/crust punk project from Czech Republic with fast political blasts that remind me of EBOLA and HARD TO SWALLOW. The snare and kick are in constant grindcore mode with some galloping moments and dual screams and growls. Nothing too fancy. The recording quality is super solid with heavy double bass pedal and polished guitars. A nasty demo in Czech with profound comments on the inspirations and meanings behind these protest songs. Impressive tape. (Jason) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, terrorelharitas.bandcamp.com)

THE BAD IDEAS – *Leave Me Alone* – Fun bright punk rock with a slime green tone. Lots of horror elements but not horror punk—more like the CRAMPS or a more streamlined TSUNAMI BOMB. They're a Scooby Doo band with goofy comic relief but still willing to deal with monsters and surprisingly dangerous situations. The cover is a comic drawing, like that RAMONES comp of the band playing in a graveyard with a slimy swamp-thing behind them, and that's pretty accurate to the vibe that they've recorded. Snotty vocals but not lazy, like someone that's in character the whole time at the costume party. I'm glad that bands like this exist year round. (Michael) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, brittadair@yahoo.com, thebadideaskc.bandcamp.com)

THE CHARLEY FEW – *The Few and the Proud* – These Philadelphians are proud to be waving the Oi! flag. Gang vocals, call and response, chants; expect the standard themes of banding together to fight back, strength and pride in your city, working hard against the elite and not trusting the police. The last song "Actions Not Words" is different. It's darker in tone and content, more of a call to action than a celebration of camaraderie, as if the battle against the hipsters is really getting to them. Instead of impending victory, they're struggling with real awareness and frustration of the blows we're taking. It makes it sound more important, as if by the end of this tape you've had your fun but now it's time to listen and rally. (Michael) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, wbart@gmail.com, thecharleyfew.bandcamp.com)

THE HOWLEEZ – *No Shame* – Sleazy shit here, for sure, Florida's THE HOWLEEZ bash out snotty glam punk that's equal parts (early) GG, TYGERS OF PAN TANG and JOHNNY THUNDERS. It's a weird mix, but no one ever said that your jams shouldn't be ugly and sexy at the same time, right? I didn't think so. (Robert) (6-song CD-R, lyrics not included, thehowleez@gmail.com, 1237 NE 17th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32609)

THE TORTURED – *Leeches On The Empire* – A seemingly young SF trio doing basic melodic punk. The first song reminds me of primitive but catchy late '70s UK punk, while later songs remind me of the DESCENDENTS. Much of it is repetitive and dragging, and the double-kick appearances have me scratching my head. There's a lot of evolving to do, but these kids are off to a pretty good start. (Matt) (7-song CD-R, lyrics not included, thetorturedband@gmail.com)

THE WYRMS – *At Wizard Island* – Surfy pop punk funneled through spacious reverb and dirty fuzz bass. There are pop hooks, but it's still presented with a mean-spirited edge. Definitely not afraid of effects that start out pop, but then start to get progressively wet with uncontrollable reverb and tremolo that makes the effect turn ugly. They're not necessarily weird on purpose. You can tell they start off trying to be cute, but their negative intuitions start to taint it and the joke's not funny anymore. They get hard and mean in the same way as THEE OH SEES and MEATBODIES. Not too weird for punk rockers and not too punk for weirdos, but probably too much for bandwagon hipsters. If you like garage psychedelia then this might ruin it for you. (Michael) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, thewyrms@gmail.com, negativefunrecords.bandcamp.com)

TSA – *Nineteeneightyfourteen* – Extremely distorted hardcore that immediately hits the ceiling of intensity and sonic capability. It works well because they are tight enough to stay out of the mud, in control of their momentum with with lots of on-a-dime tempo changes. This actually sounds live, like you're being knocked around by elbows and shoulders in the pit. It totally captures the experience of that fight-or-flight adrenaline, but it's contained excessively in your eardrums. I recommend playing this at a high volume and I don't recommend headphones. (Michael) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, badcoretsa@gmail.com, badbadbadtsa.bandcamp.com)

UGLY – UGLY is exactly what their name implies. Noticeable riffs are in danger of being consumed by feedback and other noise at all times. A garbled, writhing freak is vomiting out vocals that sound like a transmission from another dimension. The closer is downright *bouncy*, which sets this band apart from the crop of mutated sounds that are popping up all over the US right now. Solid tape. True riffs under the mire. (Greg) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, uglyrva@gmail.com, uglyrva.bandcamp.com)

VIOLENCE CREEPS – *Die* – I saw VIOLENCE CREEPS play last night. I turned to my friend during a song and said "This is an ignorant ass riff!" That ignorant riff is not on this tape, but there are plenty of other ones to make up for it. This 6-song release was recorded live, straight to tape by the band. While earlier material showcased a slower, lurching, creeping attack, this one feels faster, more honed and incisive…but honed in a feedback-filled nightmare world. Amber screams and gnashes her way through each fucked-up path that her all-male backing band lays down. There are some intentional "wrong" notes that sound so good. I don't know, man…just get it or get out. (Greg) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, violencecreeps.bandcamp.com)

WOTZIT – As soon as this tape kicked in, I was hooked. This new band from Tokyo synthesizes hardcore, noise rock and post-punk into a hard-hitting, herky-jerky assault that's upfront, in your face, and over before you even know it. This wouldn't sound out of place on Three One G Records, with the A-side in particular recalling San Diego's THE PLOT TO BLOW UP THE EIFFEL TOWER use of cutting funk chords, snaky bass, and breakneck stop-start drumming. (Sean) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, wotzit.bandcamp.com, 2-27 #1205 Toyama, Shinjuku, Tokyo, JAPAN)

V/A – *Atlantic Canada Punk* – Once again, Northeastern Canada nails this shit. Nova Scotia on one side (BRICKS, NEVER HUMAN, NEGATIVE RAGE, GRUMP, WOOLWORM, PUNK LUXURY) and Newfoundland on the flip (WEAK LINK, NOT FRIENDS, MIND VIOLENCE, BAD PLAN, NEW FLESH, CARNATION). Seriously not a bad track in the mix, and I could even argue that nothing here is even "just OK," because it's all fukkn great. Every track. Maybe I like the GRUMP track a little more than the other shit, but that's splitting hairs because I wouldn't ask anyone to turn any of this shit down anywhere, any time. There's some seriously special shit going on in that part of North America, and if you like hardcore then I suggest you start paying attention. Other highlights: WEAK LINK, NEGATIVE RAGE's cover of TINA, AGE 13, the fukkd powerviolence churn of CARNATION and the ripping MIND VIOLENCE track. Hardcore rules. (Robert) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, weaklinkrecords.bandcamp.com)

V/A – *It Gets Weirder: A Compilation of Olympia Punk in 2015* – Olympia exists as an inexplicable anomaly in punk. It seems impossible for such a small city to spawn so many amazing bands on such a constant basis. Here's a comp to prove it, featuring a staggering 27 bands. There's a lot of variety, which comes at the cost of continuity, but that's to be expected from a comp based on geography rather than genre or label. Expect: a driving, vocal-driven VEXX track, an unforgiving hardcore punch-in-the-face delivered by SLOUCH, a post-punk dreamscape from BROKEN WATER, an absolutely infectious pop punk quasi-love-song from TANKINI, some synth-pop slower jams from CC DUST and K8Y H8R, a brooding punk anthem from PERMETHRIN, a vitriolic mid-tempo hardcore track from G.L.O.S.S., and a ton more. It just doesn't stop. Maybe it's the water. (Heather) (27-song cassette, lyrics not included, smashitdead@gmail.com)

V/A – *Japan 2015* – This is an impressive collection of thirty "fresh" hardcore/punk/thrash/grind bands from Japan. The comp moves pretty fast since most of the songs are short, and the variety of sounds is vast. It's all very strong material, and I'll be sure to check out anything by BUMPED HIS HEAD, DANCE WITH ME, GEVA BOW, PICTURE ME, or TOILET if given the chance! (Matt) (30-song CD-R, lyrics not included)

V/A – *Stupid Punk Boy* – A 23-song compilation tape is a difficult beast to consume, but this thing is fairly solid from front to back. Most of the bands ride the wave of garage pop (and some instances of just *pop*) in the vein of Burger Records and, thankfully, Rip-Off. Some of the standout tracks for me include the ETTES, COACHWHIPS, COMMISERATIONS, the HIPSHAKES and PROTO IDIOT. They're standouts because they're more frantic, teetering on the edge of explosive, new wave-y with an edge or just unforgettable (which is a hard trait to come by these days). There's nothing on the entire compilation that is even close to garbage. If you're a fan of garage and new wave-style punk, you want to be tracking this one down. In a genre that usually prides itself on not giving a shit about anything, it's more than refreshing to see that this release benefits the TransLife Center of Chicago, which is an organization that supports transgender individuals in finding housing, legal support and employment. (Greg) (23-song cassette, lyrics not included, girlsville.bandcamp.com)

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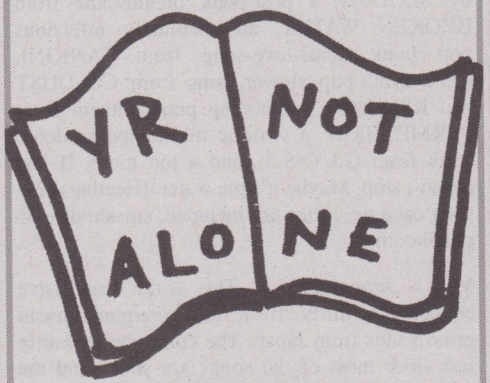

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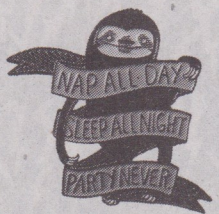

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ZINES

Send zines for review to:
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Reviewers:
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(DG) Dan Goetz
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(EW) Eli Wald
(GA) Grace Ambrose
(JB) Julia Booz
(JD) Justin Davisson
(JM) Jeff Mason
(LA) Lydia Athanasopoulos
(MM) Marissa Magic

THE CHAPESS #7
£3.00 / 52 pgs
How the fuck do they do it? The girth of this contributor-based zine is remarkable! While these pages are full of contributor content every month it definitely helps that *MRR* is a 30-plus year old worldwide institution backed with a few fulltime coordinators. *The Chapess* has put out eight issues in the past few years. The content runs the gamut of poetry, photography, paintings, illustration, journalistic prose, and more! Issue #7 has contributors (who may be familiar to the girl tumblr scrollers of this fine mag) like SBTL CLNG, Kelsey Henderson, Jane Chardiet, and more! Pay for the shipping from the UK and let this thing linger by your bed table to take in in small doses before slipping off into a finer realm. (EC)
Synchronize Witches Press and Distro, 16 Mayfield Road, Manchester M168FT UNITED KINGDOM

THE CHAPESS #8
£3.00
This zine is like walking into a room full of cool girls. Issue #8 boasts illustrations from Emma Kohlmann, the vague internet presence of SBTL CLNG and Saffa Khan. The mag starts out with an inciting essay about art and logistics urging us all to make more shit. It's dotted with poems and shorter pieces. One piece beckons us to dream for a place "beyond, the gratuitous nudity and repetitive use of the word 'vagina' in HBO's *Girls*." Contribute or *die*. (EC)
Synchronize Witches Press and Distro, 16 Mayfield Road, Manchester M168FT UNITED KINGDOM

CRISIS TOTAL #5
$3 or trade / 22 pgs
This Chilean Spanish language punk fanzine totally blew my mind! Healthy mixes of new and old through a young perspective. First up is '80s Peruvian punk band Masturbator: a list of appearances on comps, a brief history, and a deconstruction of their lyrics make up this hella thorough retrospective. DF punks Narcoestado talk about the origin of their name, state of Mexico City punk and use my new favorite term "Los Hypes" to talk about hyped punk bands. The story of one of my favorite reissues of Peruvians Ataque Frontal is explained by Bob Suren and translated into Spanish (hey English speaking punks, translate your shit!). Other awesome music fanzines like *Your War* are given exposure to Spanish speakers in the reviews section. If you can read Spanish (or if you can't and need to learn) I highly recommend this zine. It's meticulous and passionate and I wish there were more like this in the world. (AP)
discultura@yahoo.com

DESPERATE TIMES #1
$5 / 43 pgs
Kind of a weird one: peeling through the pages of this feels kind of like rifling through unsorted papers in someone's office, not knowing when they're gonna creep up behind you. Mostly old punk oriented, Chairman Ralph is putting in work to dig it up; digging through clues in comment threads in old KBD blogs to contact the old '77 punks behind classic singles or making the two hour drive for a "storytellers"-style session with Sylvain Sylvain. It's good to know that someone is hoofing it to dig up and preserve the gritty details. It's all cut up with pertinent phrases ripped from the headlines and Xeroxed photos, clip art, whatever it takes to strain the eye. The effect is to keep you looking, I suppose, which leads into the themes behind two other contributors here: one anonymous woman's thoughts on on-the-job embezzlement, one essay/rant on the geopolitics of the NWI/Illinois border. Curious to see what gets turned up for #2. (EW)
PO Box 2, St. Joseph, MI 49085-0002 / chairmanralph.com

EVERYTHING IS BULLSHIT #3
$2 / 14 pgs
A wicked zine out of Austin, TX. I liked this right away. Not only because of the NMA title and cop grabbing his balls on the cover, but also because it's actually witty, on point and looks hella cool. The creator seems disillusioned by their local scene and punk at large and has decided to distill the anger into the design and layout, and the disconnect into the writing. The Xeroxed reproduction method lends itself to the grey smears and chopped up text, and the layout is arty but still very punk. I like the honesty of the intro ("im a lazy fuck and it takes me a fuckin year to slap together this waste of your time. The questions are bad") and the stream-of-thought-association one-liner record reviews ("Oily Boys – my thoughts on Austin traffic" and "C.C.T.V. – theres brains behind this.") In this issue there are two interviews and despite what the intro says, I think the questions are insightful and I'm genuinely glad I got to read the asnwers. This issue includes a talk with Jason Lee—AKA Laura Pallmall of Blotter and Nothing Left to Learn blog—about getting into punk, moving to and away from Austin and its punk scene, complacency, slam dancing, alter egos and hoarding inspiration. The second interview is with Will Mecca—of Baja & the Blasters and Soy Babies—who talks about his cassette and VHS label Left Hand Path, upcoming releases, past projects and camera obsessions. "Pick you potato" meme at the end "is all the money!" as we say back home and I def wanna track down more by this zinester. Send in yer tapes and money! (LA)
12905 Water Wheel Cove, Austin, TX 78729

FASTCORE PHOTOS #2
48 pgs
I reject "fastcore" as a legitimate genre title, though I'm sure there are/were people who said the same about "powerviolence" or "youth crew," so what do I know? This is the second issue of this photozine done by Will Butler of To Live A Lie Records, capturing modern DIY hardcore bands of various styles playing in North Carolina. This half-size zine generally places two or three photos of the same band on a given page, separated by thick white lines in, dare I say, Instagram-style splits. The shots themselves are hit or miss in terms of subject interest, and are often cropped in odd places or have a bass neck or whatever in the foreground. I think this could've been far better had it been edited down to half the length. As with the first issue, the reproduction is quite dark and obscures a good deal of the detail at times. The lack of contrast leaves many of the photos looking muddy to the point that even pure blacks show up as dark gray, and a lot of the photos simply don't look 100% in focus. Not sure if this is due to the camera or the printer. (DG)
2825 Van Dyke Ave, Raleigh, NC 27607

GLOO #1
€3.00 / 30 pgs
As you may have guessed from the title, this is all analog. Interview questions may have actually been sent in the mail. From postage to glue sticks, no expense was spared. Clearly handmade but not half-assed, a zine crafted with love. As the intro page notes, this is something the creators hope to preserve this moment in punk time. URLs change, hard drives fail, but I will still puzzle over where in my Ikea storage scheme the zines will go each time I move. This is Belgian music zine, in English, thoroughly international in scope. Interviewed here: Greg from S.H.I.T., Chris from Despise You, Mike from Gehenna, the owner of 72 Records in Brussels, two of the boys from Belgium's Wrong Decision, the DiE lads. Also quick reports from Static Shock Weekend 2014 and from Shiesse Minelli's tour of Southeast Asia. As these are Belgian men talking to other male men, craft beer comes up more than once. (EW)
reproach.bigcartel.com

ISOLATED DISTORT #5
$2 ppd or trades / 28 pgs
This covers a lot of grindcore, a bit of hardcore, and black metal. The interview with Canadian goregrind band G.O.D. (Grotesque Organ Defilement) is *super* interesting and threw me for a loop. Why? Well, for one, the band plays guttural death/grind *but* they have songs like "The Antibro" (which has anti-Men Rights Activist lyrics which reference SLAYER) and a song about a spider goat (had to throw that in 'cause this is a true story?!?). Plus, the band's slogan is "Gore Forever / Misogyny Never." In the interview they offer a interesting perspective on pornogrind: "Most of it is truly pathetic hetero-male entitlement fantasy that could be likened to those deathcore bands who talk about killing women who broke up with them. That said, I'm curious about the idea of queering pornogrind." Whoa! I wonder what Judith Butler would think of this. Next is an interview with Boston HC band Chain Rank (which has members of Green Beret, Jock's Blood and No Tolerance). This interview was a little more general but still fairly interesting. I just wish they didn't use the spackled paint / dotted background, as it makes it really hard to read. The last interview is with New Jersey deathgrind band DETHRONED EMPEROR who, contrary to the name, sound nothing like CELTIC FROST and more like blurry version of REPULSION. Their interview is pretty interesting, especially where they say "Have you ever listen to *Cold Lake* (CELTIC FROST's least popular record, i.e. their *Grave New World*) on half-speed? It's crushing." Now I wish I never got rid of that LP. The latter part of this gets into New Brunswick, New Jersey metal bands and more music. Overall, pretty cool stuff. (JD)
milano.nicholas@gmail.com

KAZUHIRO, TRASH WORKS 1982 TO 2015, THIS IS NOT ART, THIS IS LIFE
A beautifully assembled and printed collection of work by Japan's Kazuhiro, in another edition from the Ultra Violent Art Brigade, Trematoda. Kazuhiro Imai has been active in design, illustration, collage and his local punk scene since the early '80s, doing artwork for many bands, the most prominent being seminal Japanese thrashcore outfit SxOxBx. Inspired by punk artists such as Pushead and Sugi, he combines his love of punk crudeness with traditional themes and elements, and an almost life-long dedication to the skull form. This collection is introduced by a few pages of polaroid-like pictures with cute captions that work as a form of visual biography, and is then neatly separated into drawings from the '80s, '90s and '00s, with a photo collage segment at the end. Pick this up if you are a fan, or to feed your Japanese punk archive. (LA)
kazuhiroimai.com

NO BETTER THAN APPLES #11
$4 ppd or trades to PO Box / 48 pgs
Ableism, feels, and spiraling. Depression and trauma and worthlessness. Fear and spite. Self questioning and so much hope. This zine is about living with Multiple Sclerosis and a dying mom, non-monogamy and touring, and trying to just get through it. I haven't related to anything this much all year. I am not living with a sickness like this, but a lot of the disassociation is so familiar and thus comforting. The layout is also very beautiful, a combo of typewriter, handwriting, computer, and notebook pages. They have a way of showing and not telling that is so refreshing, and so visceral. I would describe reading this from beginning to end as similar to skipping around the pages of any publication and stopping where something catches your eye except all of it catches my eye, and neural pathways. It's bright, it's heavy, it's so fucking optimistic. And the cover has a golden embossed title, and the centerfold says "Sometimes I'm Here and Sometimes I'm Not Please Bear With Me." (JB)
PO Box 1250, New Paltz, NY 12561 / teamkate@gmail.com / teamkate.com

NO FRIENDS #1
$8 / 88 pgs
It'd be pretty hard to pick up a copy of *No Friends* and not compare it to *Maximum Rocknroll*. A killer columns section, record, tape, and even digital music reviews, and a hefty dose of ad space (not so much as to distract or annoy, but yeah, a ton of ads) round out this rad first issue. There's a seemingly bonkers high price on this, but it comes with a flexi of AUSMUTEANTS and LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS, and if you're *really* broke and still wanna check it out, you can get a digital copy for cheap. As one who is *so over* tired band interviews, I was stoked to see interviews with Tom Scharpling, Martin Sorrondeguy, and the editor of *Pork*. It's definitely pretty similar in style to this mag in your hands already, but it seems like the editors are trying pretty hard to make sure the similarities stop there...or pretty close to there. (DZ)
PO Box 12343, Chicago, IL 60612 / nofriendszine@gmail.com / nofriendszine.com

RAZORCAKE #88
$4 / 111 pgs
I only ever read the official zine of bearded pop punk when I get it for review, once every year or two. Full-page Microcosm ad is a major bummer. *Fuck You Joe, sue me.* You know what you're getting as far as the general format, and the columns, at least in this issue, seem to have a common thread of being self-conscious about growing older in punk, in an "I can't/don't party anymore" kind of way. The interview with Jake Smith of Crucifix was quite good, and he sheds some light on the flaws of the people involved, including offering his perspectives that contradict accounts that were often given by other members. The interview with Worriers was also enjoyable, and the retrospective interview with John Talley Jones of the Urinals was kinda run-of-the-mill, but worth reading. There are also record reviews, which are on average not as good as ours. (DG)
PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042 / razorcake.com

RUMLAD #8
€1.50 or trade / 10 pgs
Couple of handwritten interviews laced with delicate black and white pen and watercolor illustrations of the subjects. The first one is with Nottingham's Andy Morgan of Endless Grinning Skulls and Nadir, asked about his songwriting process, memorable shows and raising a kid. The second is with Alex Wrekk, founder of the long running Portland Zine Symposium and author of *Brainscan* zine and the book *Stolen Sharpie Revolution*. Her interview is more fun than Andy's, ostensibly because Steve knows her so well, and they have a rapport that reads more conversationally. Their talk goes into her practice of witchcraft, but also focuses on her owning a business and being a long time zine creator. Since we can easily find out about the two things she is well-known for, I wonder why the witchcraft piece of it was not more explored. Rumlad is beautifully illustrated and completely handwritten. (JB)
rumladzine@gmail.com / stevelarder.co.uk

THRASHEVILLE
$10 / 122 pgs
This zine has a *ton* of color (!) photos of live bands that have played in Asheville, NC or nearby in the last year. Every show and band is reviewed which must've been a helluva task, as I can barely remember what I saw a month ago. Among bands like Cress and King Brothers, there're also photos of a guy who does a Telly Savalas tribute show! The Halloween show photos are really cool—Motley Cure and Whamzig! (The latter I'd love to hear: "*Wake Me up Before You Go-Go Whoa Whoa. Whoa!*") There are some good interviews with Asheville space rock band Nest Egg and indie rock group Morbids, plus Ohio/now Asheville rocker, Don Howland (Gibson Brothers, Bassholes, Wooden Tit, etc). There's a related talk with Greg Cartwright from the Oblivians re: Don's music. Also, of note is the multi-page band updates/scene report—and lest I forget the incredibly cool photo collection of people in the scene in various band shirts! All of these are in alphabetical order; almost as many Bathorys as Black Flags! On a similar note there's a giant collection of people's patches: back patches, patched up vests, bags, etc. Finally there're some neat photos from "Sudden Death Theater" which does movies on stage as ten-minute plays. I'd love to see others do a zine project like this in different scenes, as this is a really fantastic document. (JD)
P.O. Box 1965, Skyland, NC 28776 / thrasheville@hotmail.com

TRUST #173
€3.20 / 66 pgs
Another issue hits the shelves, with its characteristic stark black and white layout, extensive interviews and selection of reviews, reports, photo spreads and more. In this issue you'll find an "I toured with the Sleaford Mods" article-cum-interview, a long chat with Kulturausbesserungswerk (loosely translated as Cultural Repair Workshop) in Leverkusen and their history and activities, and an interview with Dortmund band Антенна. Also, of course, columns, record, book and zine reviews, a couple written in English for our enjoyment. (From the *Razorcake* review: "*MRR* is not the first address for Pop-Punk if you know what I mean"; "also people who run labels can read this book, in order to learn how it is not done," from the review of *Punk USA: The Rise and Fall of Lookout! Records*.) Who said the Germans don't have a sense of humor? Full page *MRR* ad on page two! Danke für den kontinuierlichen support! (LA)
Dolf Hermannstädter, Postfach 11 07 62, 28087, Bremen, GERMANY / trust-zine.de

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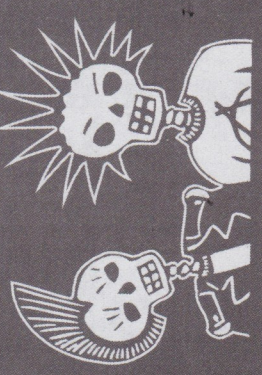

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